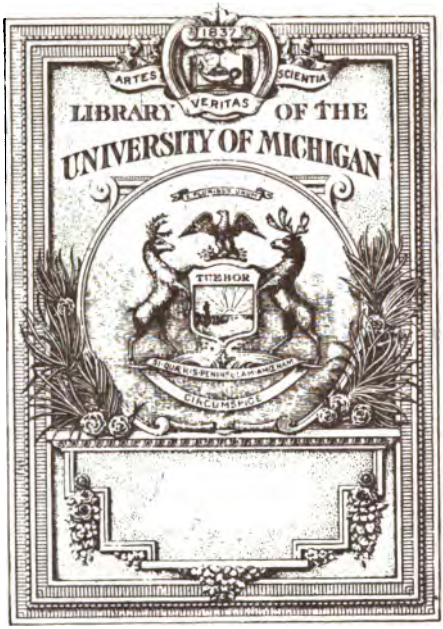

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THE LITTLE OLD LADY
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION
THE PRODUCTIVE BELIEFS
FLYING OVER LONDON

The Eyes of Faith

By
LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY OF
GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE
WITH HAPPY MEMORIES OF THE YEARS
DURING WHICH WE WORKED TOGETHER

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

THE eyes of credulity see a good many things which do not exist. The eyes of intellectual cynicism do not see many notable things which do exist. The eyes of rational faith combine discernment with criticism, and possess the insight of vital experience as well as the caution of cool and careful appraisal.

The following papers attempt to say in a somewhat easy and discursive fashion something about that view of life which appears to the eyes of Christian faith as it inspects the contents and the relationships of its own experience. About half of them first saw the light in the London weekly, The Christian Commonwealth. The others have not before been printed.

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH.

CHAPTER I

THE CHALLENGE OF LIFE

"Into this Universe and *Why* not Knowing
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing."

So wailed FitzGerald's "Omar." A good many men in our time have been inclined to take up the wail and make it their own. They have idealized their hesitations and have doubted their inspirations. They have believed in their skepticisms and they have refused to trust their faiths. They have been proud of their ignorance and ashamed of their knowledge. They have sought intellectual and æsthetic distinction in a temper of posed and self-contained bewilderment. They have boasted of their intellectual insolvency, and have found beautiful phrases in which to describe their mental bankruptcy.

In upon this situation of effete and self-conscious weariness of mind the war came with all its shuddering and terrible reality.

As a result some things have shriveled up. And among the passing fashions none has felt a heavier hand upon it than the dilettante and æsthetic hesitation of mind of which we were so proud in such recent days. We have discovered that men live by mighty affirmations. We have discovered that in days of overfed luxury in the absence of a cutting reality of experience men may play with their souls and the fundamental energies of life. But in the stern and terrible hour of testing all this stands revealed in its complete and unmitigated moral and spiritual poverty. When life speaks we know that we have been playing a sort of blind man's buff. All the while we really knew the things about which we asserted such painful ignorance.

We have not found new sources of knowledge through the war. We have found the necessity of trusting the sources of knowledge which are within our reach. The statement of a great preacher, "There is no atheism in the front trenches," puts the matter in a sentence. In the presence of life's supreme demands we know some things and we know that we know them. The insight

of the front trenches must be made the insight of everyday life.

Of course we are not pleading for an obscurantism which is unwilling to face all the facts. We must have utter honesty. We must have entire candor. We must push our way out into every path of daring and perilous intellectual investigation. But as we go we will take with us those fundamental insights which are a part of the very equipment of life itself. We will not amputate our legs in order that we may walk a tight rope. We will not cut off our arms in order that we may climb a high tree.

All this is just to say that the challenge of life is more fundamental than the challenge of formal thought. As Francis Bacon pointed out, thought may weave endless webs of clever speculation which have no relation to reality whatever. Our thinking must perpetually be brought to the test of life. The war has at least done this essential and fundamental thing for us: it has forced us to listen to the voice of life. And as we have listened we have begun to realize that we were hearing a mighty imperative, which included in the range of its authority every-

thing significant in ethics and religion and the foundation for all the deft classification which is the work of the mind.

The heart of the matter is this: When we are confronted by an academic and formal problem it is always possible to doubt. When we are confronted by the necessity for action, it is always possible to know if we are willing to pay the price of desperate and passionate sincerity, and to put our assurance into deeds. It is in the hour of illuminated activity that a man finds the fundamental verities of life. This is the explanation of the fact that so many young men found themselves and the deeper meaning of their lives during the war. A young aviator on the way back to France one day said that the war had meant just this to him: the discovery of himself and the gathering together of the powers of his life about a great purpose. The demand for action had carried him to those inner reservoirs of certainty where all things were made shiningly plain.

When we play with life, life in turn refuses to take us seriously. When we come to life armed for action, and ready for the sternest loyalty, then life reveals to us the

sources of abiding conviction and assured faith. As the Master phrased it: "If a man willeth to do, . . . he shall know." It is life then to which we must listen. It is life to which we must respond. Thought is always to be the servant of life. Logic is always to be tested by experience. And when we find that our thinking has become stale, it is always to life that we must go for a fresh experience of reality. In this way we shall learn a great truth. That truth we may phrase in this manner: Particular doubts are often justified. Particular skepticism often serves a useful purpose in leading on toward truth. But doubt itself, the attitude of doubt, is the characteristic of a decadent mind. And wholesome doubt only can exist and justify itself as the shadow of a great assurance. Intellectual decay is never the servant of true progress. The robust mind is fed by the blood flowing from a robust life. And convinced and commanding assurance is the fundamental attitude of the robust life confronted by the necessity for action.

There is only one way to certainty. That is the path of a vital experience of the deep-

est meaning of life. Certainty cannot be forced upon a man by any formal authority. It must spring forth from the sources of insight within. And the power of life, as distinct from dilettante thinking, is just in this, that it is perpetually unfolding new sources of that vital knowledge which renews the spirit of man.

CHAPTER II

THE AUTHENTIC VOICE

"It would be a dreadful thing not to have a mind," said a brilliant but weary thinker; "it is an almost more dreadful thing to have one." A man of profound knowledge of men and the ways of thought listened to the outburst. He was silent a moment. Then he said, quietly, "Yes, it is a dreadful thing to have a mind if you let it get lost from the rest of you."

As a matter of fact, a surprisingly large number of the problems which perplex men have been raised by the action of minds in a mutiny. They have been the output of minds which have forgotten that they are part of a complete organism of life, and that no part of the organism can ignore the others. The authoritative and satisfying voice is never the voice of the mind alone. It is the voice of the whole life of which the mind is only a part.

We are familiar with the story of the man

who saw a snapshot picture of a train taken when the train was moving at the rate of sixty miles an hour. He looked at the picture with great interest. At last he said: "That is a good photograph of the train, but where are the sixty miles an hour?"

With some irritation came the reply: "Why, of course, the camera can take the picture of the train, but it cannot take the picture of the sixty miles an hour."

"I see," said the man. "The camera must bring a train to a standstill in order to get its picture. And when the train is going at the rate of sixty miles an hour the camera leaves out the most important matter of all. It is very clear there are some things a camera cannot do."

It was clear enough that the man was thinking not of cameras, but of minds. There are some things minds cannot do. Professor Henri Bergson has rendered conspicuous service in calling our attention to the limited range of mental activity, and the aspects of experience which the mind cannot touch.

The bearing of all this upon any fruitful investigation of life is immediate and pro-

found. The failing philosophies have used the mind as a source rather than as one of a number of utensils. And the result has been that the system of the thinker has been palpably thin and inadequate as compared with the richness of life itself. Life is more than mind, and experience than ideas. And because religion is as large as life it will always move beyond the categories of formal logic. The fragment is true as a fragment, but it becomes false when it attempts to represent itself as a whole. The mind is a wonderful fragment of human nature. But the compelling voice is that in which all of human nature becomes articulate.

A powerful story called Those About Trench, was published in America not so very long ago. Trench was the name of the hero. He was an able young surgeon who had ceased to believe in anything but atoms. With relentless and remorseless logic he had pushed faith from his life. The story is very subtle in its fashion of dealing with the problem. There is no attempt to answer the young surgeon's skepticism from the point of view of formal argument. You simply watch him as he goes about the ways of life.

And as you watch him you make a very significant discovery Every time he is confronted by a real crisis, every time he comes to an experience of any particular meaning, he is forced for the time being to assume for a practical purpose the very things which he denies theoretically. He is forced to do this because only so can he deal with the situation adequately. And if you are a person of reflection as well as a person of discernment, at last you ask yourself what can be the validity of a position which a man must deny practically as often as he affirms it theoretically.

The moment we let experience, as it works through all the aspects of a man's life, become articulate, that moment a vivid and compelling answer is given to no end of questions which have perplexed us. The mind is given its proper place as one instrument for the finding of truth, to be checked and guided by the others. The authoritative voice is the voice of the whole nature of a man as it responds to the whole of experience.

Now, if we think of this voice of commanding authority, this voice of the whole

nature of man, as a white light making plain our way, we shall not only have a good figure as far as we go, but we shall have a figure which suggests our going farther. Let us pass this white light through a prism, and see of what it is composed. First, there is the heart. There is the whole emotional life as an instrument of finding reality. Of this we shall speak in a more detailed way in a later chapter. It is enough now to remind ourselves that there is a genuine basis in the theory of knowledge for the assertion,

> "It is the heart and not the brain
> That to the highest doth attain."

The emotional life, strange and subtle as it is, offers us an approach to truth of which some day we shall learn to make the most. Like the mind, it must not be used alone. But as one element in the making of the guiding voice it is of very great importance. Then there is the conscience. The sense of distinction between right and wrong is a fundamental element in our nature. And that sense of difference, much as it may be misguided, is a means for finding truth. It

is unreliable when used alone. It is necessary as a part of that instrumentality by means of which we find our way. The will is a means to truth. The moment of action is a moment of insight. The man who has nothing but a will is ill-equipped. But the man who uses his will as one instrument in the finding of truth will learn that it does yeoman service. The mind itself is one of the principal instruments and most effective when it works with the others. One of these elements may go strangely astray. But when a point of view or an attitude toward life meets the combined demands of mind and conscience and heart and will, we may follow it without much fear. A piece of our nature often asks for the wrong thing. The whole nature is calling loudly for the right thing.

This does not mean that we have within ourselves resources for our own complete satisfaction. It does mean that we have within ourselves a means of testing when we are really satisfied. The authoritative voice is the voice of our whole life, telling us when there is still the hunger of a great need, and also telling us when the bread of life has

been found. The mind has a conspicuous part in the making of this voice. But it is not the voice of the mind; it is the voice of the complete life which has a final and commanding authenticity.

CHAPTER III

THE THINGS WE MUST ASSUME

We all remember with a touch of vivid interest the story of how Descartes sat through a long winter day alone, except for the company of his fire and his thoughts, relentlessly excluding one after another the things it was possible for him to doubt, until at last he came to the necessity for admitting that he could not deny the existence of the process of thought by which he doubted. Here at last was certain ground, and when it was formulated it became the famous dictum, "I think, therefore I am." Perhaps it might have been expressed with a little more penetration if it had been phrased, "I doubt, therefore I am."

Without committing ourselves to any detail of Descartes's thinking, it is clear that unless we are to bring life to a standstill there are some things we must take for granted. We can deny them theoretically, but we can never deny them practically, for

they are involved in the very ongoing of life itself. The man who assumes all sorts of things without critical inspection is landed in complete intellectual confusion. The man who refuses to assume anything makes thought impossible. For there is always a major premise hidden in the background of thought which is involved in the validity of the process, but is not itself subject to proof.

In these days of mental and moral and spiritual sifting, when the very tenseness of the world-wide experience of war has made us impatient with make-believe, there is particular need that we scrutinize with entire candor, and with a thorough understanding of the issues involved, the nature of thought itself. We cannot give this matter over to hidden experts of the meaning of whose methods we have no understanding. The issues are matters of mental life or death when we have grasped at least enough of the mental method of life, to be sure of our foundations.

In a certain university two able young thinkers had been having a tremendously vigorous mental tussle. One of them had

conducted a long and daring process of thought to prove that man is not possessor of freedom, that he is a part of a vast mechanism with the movement of whose wheels he has really nothing to do, and in the midst of whose processes he is absolutely helpless. He closed with a triumphant flourish: "Now, what has become of your freedom?" he asked.

His friend smiled a slow, sure, steady smile, and replied: "And if freedom is gone, what becomes of your argument?"

"What do you mean?" came the instant question.

"I mean," was the reply, "that in every stage of the process by which you have reasoned freedom out of life you have assumed the thing you were endeavoring to deny. Every appeal to my mind, every putting of the argument, assumed that you have a free mind which can construct a process of reasoning, and that I have a free mind which can respond to the appeal of the argument. You have tried to use freedom in such a way that it would cut off its own head. And just because your conclusion attempts to deny what you had to assume in order to argue

at all, your whole process of reasoning is discredited. Freedom is involved in rationality, and therefore you never can use the reason as a means to deny its existence. Your conclusion never can assert that your major premise is false, unless your logic itself has gone mad."

The first important matter for every man who would deal with life's supreme problems, is by a most careful and critical process of analysis to discover what things it is necessary to assume in order to use the rational process at all, and when it comes to living, what things it is necessary to assume in order to deal with life in a way of genuine response. For these things are part of the very warp and woof of thought and experience. Our denial of them is always futile. They belong to the great river of life, and in its flood they sweep away our little denials in the rush of their mighty currents.

Before a man does other things he needs to inspect the instruments of thought, to see their meaning and their use, and to see that if you attempt to destroy these instruments you have nothing but a dead silence left. It

is not possible to argue away the principles on which the dependableness of argument itself depends.

Perhaps the really fundamental defect in that powerful structure Herbert Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy was that in the most innocent and childlike fashion Spencer assumed the dependablenes of the instruments of thought. He made not the slightest attempt to see what was involved in their validity. He made not the most primary endeavor to discover to what principles he was committed when he assumed that the mind could be depended upon. And so once and again with grave dignity he used all his intellectual resources to discredit some principle without whose validity his whole structure of reasoning would fall to the ground. That he never realized this is only an illustration of how lacking in critical acumen was that type of Victorian dialectic which supposed that classification is thinking, and that you have a right to generalize in a quite lawless fashion completely apart from the necessities of that rational process upon which you are depending. It was a favorite pastime of some nineteenth-century thinkers to kill

their only steed in order to get quickly up the hill.

When we have soberly and adequately surveyed those fundamental processes upon which we must depend if life is to have any meaning at all, we are saved from playing no end of mental tricks with ourselves, and we find many problems solved, at least as far as concerns any world where the necessities of actual experience are considered.

If all this seems remote from our palpitating and intense human interests, we need simply to see that it is remote in just the sense in which a foundation is remote from a house. Foundations are not parlor decorations, and they cannot be served for dinner. Yet we cannot do without them.

CHAPTER IV

DENIALS WHICH CONTRADICT THEMSELVES

In a heated debate in a public school a young lad cried out, excitedly, "I deny the fact."

"That is rather worse for you than for the fact," said the teacher with an amused smile. Age produces more of a sense of verbal consistency. We choose our phrases with more care. But, after all, a good many of us do go on denying facts. And a good many of us make denials full of such inner inconsistencies as to be the equivalent of affirmations. "Analyze your denials," said a wise teacher of logic, "and be sure that you know what they involve before you commit yourself to their expression." The day of supreme earnestness in a man's life, if he realizes the actual demands of the situation, is sure to be a time when he takes thorough account of his denials.

There are three stages in a man's mental life from the standpoint of this analysis. One is the stage when he takes his beliefs on authority in simple and unquestioning receptiveness. The second is the stage when he questions all his assurances to see of what stuff they are made, and how far they can justify themselves at the bar of earnest and impartial investigation. The third is the stage when he subjects the denials of his assertive and adolescent skepticism to the most searching scrutiny. The state of really large-minded, impartial judgment has been reached when a mind of a certain type has learned to treat its own doubts as remorselessly as it has been in the habit of treating other people's faith.

A young man of quick and agile mind had just been passing through a period of relentless questioning of everything in heaven and earth. At least he thought he had questioned everything. But one night he was telling the story of it all to a kindly, shrewd, and wise old minister whom he loved and trusted.

"My only difficulty with you, Tom," said the minister when he had heard the whole

story, "is that you have not carried your criticism far enough."

An odd flush came over the young man's face. "And just how would you set about going farther?" he asked.

"Why, I should begin to try out the effect of denying some of my denials," was the telling reply.

As a matter of fact, denials are most fascinating and dangerous things. They are fascinating because they seem to indicate such a splendid freedom from the chains of the past, such a capacity to find one's own way, and such actual strength of mind. Many a man obtains and retains mental self-complacency principally through his denials. But they are also dangerous things. When you welcome a denial to your mental house all its poor relations at once begin to follow, and if you do not watch, everything you have to eat is devoured by the hungry lot. A denial, to use another figure, is a very sharp weapon, but you must know how to wield it or you may cut your fingers, or even inflict quite unintentionally a deadly wound.

Take a very simple and obvious illustra-

tion. Here is a man who denies that God ever takes account of individual prayers. The whole universe, he declares, is a vast network of laws which are never broken. In this vast system of uniformities there are no breaks. All is perfectly oiled. All moves with unhesitating precision and celerity. It is presumption to declare that the petition of a human being can break this perfect system.

The only difficulty with this denial is that the argument by which it is supported has already broken the perfectly mechanical system of hard-and-fast cause and effect. The mind which constructed the mental picture of that vast machine moving with perfect precision and undeviating definiteness, and then argued from that as to the futility of prayer, was already working outside the system it described. Within that system there could be no such wonderful movement of the freely choosing mind as is involved in the construction of this argument. The argument itself refutes the conclusion the moment a critical mind is applied to it. If prayer is to be discredited it must be by some less treacherous argument than this.

The supreme illustration of this sort of futility is the denial of the supernatural. To be sure, we need definition here. By the supernatural some obscurantist thinker may mean his own favorite bit of theological mythology. But what we mean as we use the illustration is the existence in the world of something uncontrolled by that relentless mechanical uniformity which we associate with the laws of physics and chemistry. Now, the man who produces a learned process of reasoning to justify his denial of the supernatural in this sense is at the very moment illustrating the thing he is denying. Whether or not there is a supernatural God, there is surely a supernatural man. The very swift power with which he argues proves that our disputant is not held in the clutches of a rigid system with no free movement in it. You have to be outside such a system in order to conceive of it. You have to be outside such a system in order to reason about it. You have to be outside such a system in order to assert that you believe in it.

Many more illustrations of the fallacy of the unanalyzed denial will occur to the

thoughtful reader. In fact, it will be as he works through his own mind the principles we have been discussing that he will discover their range and importance. The moral of the discussion is brief. It is easy to mount a doubt. It is not so easy to know where the fiery steed will carry you. Of course, in spite of Dante, there is a great refusal that is a right refusal. But that makes it all the more necessary to analyze our denials.

CHAPTER V

A PERSONAL WORLD

A TOURIST had just been visiting Madame Tussaud's gallery. He was describing the experience with much gusto. "When I first entered," he said, "I thought there were crowds of people all about me. I soon found that there were not many visitors. Most of the people were only wax."

His pessimistic friend broke in at this. "I have found life like that," he said. "I began with intense enthusiasm. I believed that there were real people everywhere. Soon I found that there were no people at all; they were all wax. And I, too, was wax. It makes the world a dull gray when a man makes such a discovery. But at least he knows that he has faced the facts." A keen student of philosophy who was of the party here interjected. "But if you are only wax how could you ever find it out? And how can wax be proud of its intellectual honesty?"

All other questions come at last to one great interrogation: Do we really live in a personal world? Or are we automata living in a mechanical world where there is no personality anywhere? And when that question is answered it throws light on every other question which we can ask. Profoundly the war has been fought about that question. For close analysis will reveal the fact that Germany had built its life about an impersonal conception of the world. That impersonal conception cut the root of ethics. It banished the sense of personal responsibility. It created a civilization without conscience and without remorse. The world was not safe until that civilization went down. Now that the war is over, we need to lift the splendid but somewhat vague sense of personal values which has characterized Anglo-Saxon life into clear and sharp perspective. We need to think it through, and to see what are its deepest meanings and its practical implications.

A powerful chapter could be written in a book discussing this matter on "The Alternatives of the Personal View." When we look squarely at the implications of any im-

personal conception of life it becomes evident that there is inevitable wreckage everywhere if you accept and act on the implications of an impersonal view. A gifted modern novelist has written a telling story, analyzing with scrupulous fidelity the psychology back of certain criminal actions. The whole story comes in brief to this. A certain sensitive and responsive character grew up in an environment where nobody believed in personality. The people were highly trustworthy and respectable. Though they believed that they were machines in a mechanical world they kept the moral law as if they still believed in its sanctions and its responsibilities. The character about whom the analysis centers, however, saw no reason for living under the control of sanctions which had been completely discredited. So when somebody got in the way, it seemed an easy thing to use a bit of poison and end the life which had become an obstacle. In a world where responsibility was only a name, what possible reason was there to have any other guide than just the exigencies of the situation? Morality in the old sense had simply ceased to exist. It is a

simple statement of fact that you cannot maintain the ethical sanctions in a world where everybody ceases to believe in personality.

To be sure, the very scientific defense constructed by this character required powers only possessed by a person. Anybody who could construct such a defense for murder had really proved the possession of just those powers of freedom and responsibility which make murder a crime. You never can create an analysis of an unethical universe without demonstrating the existence of those very things which you are attempting to deny.

But the thing which produces a wholesome reaction on the part of men in general from such views is not a consciousness of the effective dialectic by which they can be refuted. It is just the sense that they are the supreme dangers of the wholesome and full and happy experience of life itself. Because they would break apart everything which makes life have meaning and value, a poised common sense repudiates them.

Lord Byron once wrote a terrible and lurid poem called "Darkness." It described

what happened when the sun went out like a lamp whose oil is exhausted. Men burned up everything they could burn, until at last their resources were exhausted. Then in freezing cold one by one they died. The last picture is of two dying men staring at each other across the waning light of the last fire in all the world. Personality, with its powers of freedom and responsibility and creative thought and self-directed action, is that without which the world has no heat and no light. Blot that out and you have a darkness and cold more profoundly tragic than that which Lord Byron so strikingly described. The alternatives to a belief in personality are more intolerable than death.

Sometimes we make the problem more difficult by trying to solve it in relation to the personality of God, instead of beginning with personality in man and rising from that to the larger problem. We can get at all the facts in respect of the functioning of personality in man. We have no such power in respect of the Deity. Now, the fundamental fact about men is just that every thought he thinks and every real act of his life involves the assumption of the things which we mean

by personality. The man who denies personality denies that which he must assume hundreds of times every day of his life. When he rises in the morning the first meaning of the day comes to him in the terms of personal choice. His hours of wakefulness get their whole meaning from his personal decisions. The more brilliantly he denies personality the more he is driven back upon it in his own experience. There is a powerful argument for the personality of God. But the immediate place of strategic battle is in the consciousness of man. Here he finds personality. It is the one, ultimate, unescapable fact of his experience.

When an able and influential philosopher declared, "I cannot find an I," he revealed quite unconsciously the complete impossibility of his position. His subject was the thorough and entire refutation of the position involved in his predicate. The man who has discovered the meaning of personality has made the most fundamental discovery of his life.

CHAPTER VI

THE MORAL SANCTIONS

"I HAVE a mind, but my conscience has me." The speaker was a man with a shrewd and analytical habit of observing his own mental and moral processes.

The friend who was standing beside him threw in this remark: "I know just what you mean about your conscience having you. But the question to me is where conscience gets its right to be so masterful."

The first speaker had a reply ready. "All that I need to know is this," he said, "all the horses would run away if conscience lost its grip on the reins."

In the period of searching of brain and searching of heart following the war, it is, of course, inevitable that the moral processes of human life will be subjected to the most prolonged and critical scrutiny. Conscience must justify itself at the bar of the experience of the world. Is it an ugly and tyrannical autocrat which must go its way with

the other autocrats who are being sent on long journeys in these amazing days? Is it a wise old judge whose decisions have the very welfare of the world in their grasp? No questions have a more strategic significance than these in these days of momentous change.

A quick and effective way to get at the heart of the problem is found when we raise the question as to what would be the practical result if we were to discard the results of the ethical experience of the race and put the categorical imperative on the scrapheap. Take the matter of telling of the truth as an obvious and immediate illustration. Here is a disillusioned man who makes up his mind that life is not a matter of principle; it is a matter of skillful strategy. He will not tell the truth unless it is to his advantage. He will be guided by the immediate results, and not by any sense of ethical responsibility. For a time he is brilliantly successful. Men believe him when he tells them lies. And so again and again he gets the advantage of them. He congratulates himself upon his shrewdness, and he smiles with a superior cynicism at the thought of the simple-

mindedness of his dupe. But at length men begin to find him out, and he finds at last that his most valuable capital was the confidence of his fellow men. Having lost that, he has lost everything. Or it may be that he lives in a community where other men accept the same view of truth-telling as a childish characteristic which should be outgrown by the mature mind. He finds other men getting the better of him. And he suddenly wakes to the fact that a man who refuses to tell the truth except when it is to his personal advantage really makes no particular headway unless he lives in a world where other men accept the standards he has repudiated, and believe that he too is still bound by them. A world of frankly open liars would be a world in which human relationships would simply disintegrate. As far as the telling of the truth is concerned the demand of ethics is structural in any real and developing social life. It is the only thing which keeps life from falling apart.

A brilliant young literary man was once expressing his freedom from what he regarded as conventional standards of morals in flamboyant and zestful language. "It is

my first responsibility to get all the kinds of sensations I can out of life," he said; "then I will write about them. No man has a right to stand between me and vivid and glowing sensations and gripping and compelling experiences. If he tries, I will simply push past his objections and have them in spite of him."

A man who was standing near looked up and, after surveying the young author for a moment, said: "Of course the fundamental difficulty about your position in these matters lies in the fact that it involves the death of the capacity to feel."

Life is so built that self-restraint in the name of a great ideal increases a man's capacity to feel. And lawless indulgence defeats its own purpose, leaving a man who makes the motions of an experience with a heart cold and dry all the while. It is only those feelings which are the by-product of a noble self-control which are permanent.

Lord Byron once cried out tragically about his incapacity to feel as he had once felt and to weep as he had once wept. He had sought sensations and vivid experiences in the very way which made him lose them.

What he thought was a convention proved to be a part of the very structure of life itself.

The moral sanctions are not something imposed upon men from without. They are written in the nature of men, and experience simply brings them to expression. The man who attacks them is like a man who would insist that he could get along better without a skeleton because the bones are hard.

CHAPTER VII

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SIN AND EVIL

A BRILLIANT teacher was lecturing in a certain institution of learning on "Ethical Insight." One of the students carried away in his notebook some sentences to which he went back again and again.

"The beginning of the understanding of the ethical problem," said the teacher, "is the apprehension of the distinction between evil and sin. Certain things are wrong, whether or not we know that they are wrong. These things constitute the evil of the world. As we develop in moral insight we come to understand that certain things are wrong. If we persist in doing them, we are not merely in a tangle of evil, we have become involved in personal sin. Sin is the wrong you follow when you know that it is wrong. Evil is the whole realm of that which is wrong, quite apart from our recognition of its quality."

John Wesley put the matter in one of his shrewd, practical sentences when he declared that sin is voluntary violation of known law. A man is responsible for personal sin. He is often an innocent victim as regards the matter of evil.

Let us look for a little while upon some of the corollaries of the point of view which we have just analyzed. In the first place, it enables us to be just to all the strange and bewildering pathways of individual experience. A man lives in a confusing world where all sorts of things press in upon him. His own responsible life, however, has to do with the circle of his understanding. When he does a thing that is wrong without realizing that it is wrong, you have a tragically sad situation, but you do not have sin in the sense of the deliberate bent of the will toward that which is persisted in, although it is known to be wrong. To recognize wrong, and in defiance to persist in it, represents the darkest tragedy of the personal life. When a man does wrong ignorantly he needs more knowledge. Socrates was quite right in his belief that in this situation new knowledge would mean new virtue. And there are al-

ways men in the world who do not see that the moral problem goes any deeper than this. They have faced the problem of ethical ignorance. They have never looked squarely in the eye the problem of deliberate wrongdoing.

When a man knows that a thing is wrong and does it in spite of that knowledge, he needs not enlightenment but a changed attitude of life, a changed will. The man who does wrong in ignorance needs to be taught. The man who does wrong deliberately needs regeneration. There are these two types of men, and there are these two types of experience in the individual life. It is often true that the very same man needs enlightenment as regards one problem, and a structural rectification of his will as regards another. The problem of ignorance is a relatively simple problem. The problem of a wrong direction of the will is the most cruelly difficult problem in all the world. The ethical flaw in the position of the pacifist lies in the fact that he sees the problem of evil, but he has never faced the problem of sin. The existence of a will toward wrong is the crucial fact which a man must meet

candidly if he is going to deal with the basal ethical problem of the world.

In the second place the analysis whose implications we are following out to their meaning for practical life enables us to look frankly at the significance of the right quite apart from the psychology of the particular people we are studying. There is such a thing as right. There is such a thing as wrong. And the ethical meaning of any period is bound up in the capacity of the people then alive to go forth as discoverers of this standard, which exists quite independently of their likes and dislikes, and all the winding ways of their personal experience. If the world after the war is to have ethical solidity, it must develop a new and reverent sense of life's great and eternal moral values. With Kant it must be able to cry, "I still feel the splendor of the moral law."

If we are going to be fair to particular men in all the bewildering tangle of their personal life, and also keep our high and austere sense of life's ultimate moral meanings, we must keep constantly before us the distinction between sin and evil. And we

must be daringly honest in declaring that sin is as bad as it is. A world of ignorant victims would present many problems, and we have just these problems in our world. But a world of men who at some point of their lives have clearly seen the best and have definitely chosen the worse is the world we must live in and understand and serve. More than this, it is a world in whose tragedy we participate. One world needs a university. The other needs a church. One world needs a prophet. The other needs a Saviour. One world needs enlightenment. The other needs redemption. The world in which we live must have both.

CHAPTER VIII

WHY EARNEST MEN DO NOT AGREE

"If I could mobilize the moral earnestness of the world I could win in any fight." The speaker was a passionate reformer who happened also to be a man who possessed much shrewd knowledge of human nature.

"You seem much disturbed about it," said his friend.

"I am disturbed about it," came the quick reply. "The truth of the matter is that from one third to one half of the earnest and sincere people involved in the conflict fight on the wrong side in every great battle for righteousness. It is the most tragic thing I know."

Untold suffering and tragedy and confusion have come to the world because of the incapacity of earnest and truth-seeking men to agree about the issues which have confronted them. It seems that no cause is so bad but that somewhere you will find a good

man who advocates it. And usually the bad causes boast of at least a few saints among their advocates. The worst of it is that the manipulators of bad causes always know how to extract the full value from the noble men who adhere to their positions. The character of a noble man who advocated it has kept many an evil cause from disastrous failure, and has brought many an ignoble movement to success. The exploiting of a good man's influence in the name of a reactionary movement is one of the commonest things in the world. Sometimes it almost seems as if the intellectual confusion of good men is responsible for almost as much evil in the structure of contemporary life as the really sinister designs of men who are bad in purpose, bad in thought, and bad in action.

It is clear enough that if we can come to some definite understanding of the curious ethical dilemma produced by the disagreements of really good men, we will have found light on one of the most important and one of the most difficult problems involved in men's life together and in their relations with each other.

A half-century ago the United States of

America met the tragic experiences of a great civil war. Nowhere were those dark days more full of heart-burning and torturing pain than in the border States lying between the contending sections. Here passions at white heat strove for the mastery in every community, and often within the walls of a single household. In a little village in Kentucky lived a father and a mother and their two sturdy sons. The father had come North from Alabama. The mother was a New England school-teacher who had come to Kentucky. The father believed in the cause represented by the South; the mother believed in the cause represented by the North. One of the boys agreed with his father; the other agreed with his mother. Both were eagerly earnest. Both were profoundly moved by the crisis. At last, when the call came to their door, the two walked down the little path in front of their cottage, paused a moment at the gate, and there shook hands before they separated, one to fight in the Union Army, the other going to join the forces arrayed against the life of the republic.

The explanation of such situations as this

involves at the start a clear perception of one fundamental distinction. The sense of moral demand is one thing; the grasp on the intellectual contents of that demand is quite another. The profound conviction that there is a right way is one thing. The practical judgment as to what way is right is quite another. The sense of moral distinction is one thing. The view of what that moral distinction involves in any particular situation is quite another. As the late Professor Olin Alfred Curtis has brilliantly pointed out, the sense that something is right and that something is wrong is the fundamental matter in conscience, and is shared by all men. The decision as to what definite thing is right and what definite thing is wrong, is a matter of mental appraisal, and here you have differences as wide as the varieties in mental approach and mental method. You cannot educate the conscience, though you can deepen it. You can educate the mind which decides what content shall be given to the demand of conscience. And this education is the most important practical matter in the world.

The corollaries of this analysis are two.

The first has to do with a larger spirit of charity. We can be more patient with the man fighting on the other side, for he may be just as earnest as we. The second has to do with a new severity. We must subject our own processes of judgment and those of other men to the most remorseless scrutiny. For, in spite of all our earnestness, our minds may be playing tricks with us and we may be harnessing our sincerity to a position which had no right place in the life of the world. The whole moral philosophy of education lies here.

CHAPTER IX

THE MORAL BATTLE

A LITTLE group of men was having an animated discussion. Some one had raised the question: What is the greatest thing about a man?

At once one member of the group spoke out: "Why, of course, it is his ability to think."

"Not at all," declared another. "It is his ability to decide. It is the power of his will."

"You are both wrong," insisted a third. "It is his power to feel. All the great things in life go back to emotion at last. If men could not feel with eager responsiveness, civilization itself would decay."

Another member of the group, whose face was like the map of a country where great battles have been fought, now broke into the discussion. "None of you have gone far enough," he asserted. "The greatest thing about a man is his capacity to get into a moral fight."

That hovering sense of an ideal which we must take seriously, that profound apprehension of an ethical compulsion which we must obey, that facing of a moral imperative which sweeps across our lives with the regal step of a great ruler, that power to go forth in noble battle in the name of the overlordship of the moral law, is indeed the central and fundamental thing in human life. The thing which lifts humanity into a completely new set of relationships is the conflict a man wages in the name of his sense of what he ought to be and what he ought to do. "I am both the fighter and the fight," said a great thinker. Every man's life provides the cause, the weapons, and the contending hosts.

"I feel two natures struggling within me," declared Victor Hugo. The matter never has been put more simply, more directly, or more adequately. A man's inner life is not an organism, it is not in harmony with itself; it is not controlled in the name of one overmastering principle. It consists of forces set in battle array. It is full of chaotic and untamed energies. "I could have my way," said a young man whose position and pos-

sessions gave him much power, "but I have so many ways, and they fight each other." And over this confused mass of varied desires there emerges at last a gripping ideal of what life ought to mean. In that hour a man meets destiny. He is called to enlist in a great warfare. He is called to fight against anarchy in his own soul. He is called to fight for a unified and wise central government in his own life.

Some men refuse to fight. They do not really evade the issue. They simply decide it in the wrong way. For to refuse to bear arms in the moral warfare is to deplete the forces of righteousness and in effect to fight on the wrong side. And when the conflict is the battle to keep one's own soul alive, to refuse to fight is to surrender. The moral pacifist admits the enemy in triumph to the precincts of his own soul.

When a man enlists, and dons the uniform, and bears arms, and goes forth to obey the commands of the Moral Captain, he has made the most momentous decision of his life. There is no moment of more strategic meaning than that when one faces and accepts the moral responsibility of being a

man. "If there are any good wars when I grow up, I mean to fight in them," Sir Philip Sidney is said to have declared when a boy. In the moral realm there are always good wars. And the fight for victorious moral personality is the determining matter in every man's life.

CHAPTER X

THE MORAL DILEMMA

"THE strangest thing about life is the moral problem involved in being a man." The speaker was a man who had traveled much and read much and thought much.

One of the party turned toward him curiously. "I do not think that I know what you mean," he said.

"Just this," replied the first speaker. "A man is so made structurally that if he is completely careless of moral things, his whole life disintegrates, and when once he becomes serious and earnest he begins to suffer from a deeper and deeper discontent. The more earnest he becomes the more restless and discontented he is. One way lies moral shipwreck. The other way seems to lie madness. Sometimes it seems as if the Maker of the world had played a cruel trick upon man."

The problem involved in this conversation is the profoundest question of ethics, and it has to do with the deepest matters of reli-

gion. If we can come to some genuine understanding of it, we will have a new apprehension of the actual meaning of life. Let us approach it from two different angles. We all have wondered over the situation presented by the experience of a man who was happy and careless and popular in his young manhood, not quite approved by anybody but liked by everyone. This young man becomes serious and earnest. He finds a great moral passion. Now a curious thing happens. He becomes hard and rigid. Everybody respects him. Nobody can deny his intense and noble integrity. But nobody likes him. He has lost in attractiveness just what he has gained in character. On the other hand, think for a moment of the ethical experience of a man like Thomas Carlyle. His moral battle became more and more intense, until at last one day he cried out in hot agony: "I will live a white life. I will live a white life if I go to hell for it." His very earnestness seemed to be tearing his life asunder.

Now, what is the meaning of experiences like these? For we must frankly admit that they are typical. There is in man's nature a

moral pressure which he must take seriously at the peril of his very character. And the more seriously he does take it the more a restless discontent is released in his life. The more we study the ethical experience of men the more we see how pervasive is this extraordinary moral dilemma. If a man is absolutely careless, he is going to the devil. If he is absolutely serious and passionately determined to live up to his ideal, he is likely to become so sharply censorious that, much as we respect him, we would prefer to have him live in another house than our own.

What is the explanation of this curious psychological phenomenon? What is the meaning of this widely diffused and puzzling human experience? If we are not willing to plunge into complete ethical pessimism, we must insist that this whole practical moral entanglement means something, and means something which is good for men. But what does it mean?

When we think clearly and directly, it becomes evident that the only way out of the difficulty is some interpretation of life which makes this whole ethical experience a halfway house on the way to something satisfy-

ing and complete. If it represents the conclusion of the whole matter, we are left in confusion. If it is only a step toward that which brings our lives to fullness and peace, then there may be a possibility of keeping both our candor and our hope. Man is clearly a moral pilgrim. What is his goal?

CHAPTER XI

ON TO RELIGION

"THE man with a moral ideal brings discomfort everywhere. If we could only forget all about morality, we might be happy." So declared a hotly wrathful ethical anarchist who wanted to cast all thought of righteous demands from the world. We have already analyzed briefly that moral dilemma which makes such outbursts as this possible. We have seen that an increase in moral earnestness is very likely to take just the form of making a man restless and hard to live with. We also have seen that if he refuses to be nobly serious about life, his whole manhood will suffer from a terrible process of inner decay. What is the way out of this disconcerting and difficult situation?

Let us analyze the experience of the ethically earnest man a little more closely. He hears a voice within telling him that he must be loyal to the best he knows. He begins to try. He finds that he knows so much that

is good to do, so much that is evil from which to turn, that he begins to be bewildered. He tries to live up to his light. But, to use a clever phrase of Samuel Crothers, more lights are turned on all the while. He suffers from what Professor Olin A. Curtis has powerfully called the merciless expansion of the moral task. The more he tries to live up to his moral ideal the more it enlarges and grows until it quite outruns him. He tries to find the spot where the rainbow of his ideal touches the ground, but the harder he runs the more his goal recedes. At last he cries out with Hegel, "I see the ideal all the while, but I simply cannot realize it." When we look closely upon this experience we see that the man's emphasis is upon action, upon his own action. He is trying to live in such a fashion that he can rest contented with his own achievement. And the harder he tries the more impossible it becomes. He is flung at last despairing upon his own incapacity. The ideal beckons. He cannot capture it.

At this point there is one possible suggestion which seems to throw light upon the whole situation from the moment when we

begin to consider it. Perhaps all this struggle and failure is just meant to teach a man that he cannot realize his own ideal in his mind and in his conscience. Then there awakens a desire for some great supplement of his weakness by a powerful strength which shall enable him to find a way out of restlessness into rest, out of confusion into certainty, out of despair into hope.

A friend of mine had a rather self-important, tiny daughter. He was much concerned that she should grow up to be a gentle and nobly poised and unselfish woman. One day he took her for a climb in the White Mountains of New England. Choosing a difficult trail, he suggested that she go first. He could follow. Right zestfully she began to climb. She was glad to show her father how strong and capable she was. But the trail grew steeper and more difficult. She slipped and fell. The thorns cut her. Tears came on her cheeks. Still she persisted. She had a strong will, and she was determined not to fail. But at last the task became completely impossible, and after the most cruel fall of all she turned weeping to her father. He took her tenderly in his arms, and they

climbed to the top of the mountain together. He never had intended her to do it alone.

We were never intended to climb the mountain of our ideal alone. The whole experience was meant to teach us that our life is to be supplemented by a great invisible Friend. The Master of Life is waiting. And when we have learned that our very nature is crying out for him, that the very structure of our lives involves completion only through a great Companionship, then we are ready to pass to that new relation where we find completion and peace in a noble dependence upon the great Father, who intends that we shall climb the mountain together. So the restlessness of our moral passion is changed to the peace of a moral dependence. So we pass from the realm of moral conflict to the realm of serenity. So we enter the gates of religion.

CHAPTER XII

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORALITY AND RELIGION

A GROUP of men were sitting by the cheerful fire in the lounge of a certain university club. They were discussing several well-known men in the city where they all lived.

"Jenkins is wonderfully religious," said one of them, "but his moral sense seems quite undeveloped."

There was a little smile at that. Then a second member of the circle spoke. "And Marlowe," he said, "has a perfectly possessing moral passion, while he does not seem at all interested in religion."

One of the men by the fire had been rather silent during the whole discussion. Now he turned toward the others, and spoke quietly: "As to Thorndale," he said, "we will all agree that he has a deep and powerful religious life, which is all the while expressing itself in action devoted to practical righteousness."

The passionate sincerity which has come to many men as a result of their experience during the tense days of the war has accentuated our consciousness of such contrasts as those expressed in this conversation. We wonder what the cause of this kind of difference may be. We begin to feel that we need a new understanding of the structural relationships and significance of those experiences which we call ethical and religious.

A wise old man who had a characteristic habit of long and careful introspection, but who had never become morbid as a result of his expeditions into his interior life, was once discussing his experience with a friend whom he deeply trusted.

"There were three decisive crises in my early life," he said. "The first was when I made up my mind to be loyal to the very highest demand which came to me. Out of that decision came a sense of ethical urgency which has enriched my whole life. But something torturing came out of it too. For it was not long until I was caught in the coils of so involved a sense of ethical responsibility that I was completely bewildered. My head was dizzy with the noise of buzzing loy-

alties. Then came that crisis in my life when I learned the deepest secret of all. There was a reenforcement outside my own life whose help I could claim. The very meaning of my hesitation and confusion and incompleteness was that my life was to be lived with God, and not apart from God. He became the greatest fact of all, and trust in him my most defining experience. Then for a little while I was so possessed by the rapture of this new relationship that I did not see its ethical implications. I was so busy trusting God that I did not feel the deep necessity of doing his will. I was brought to a sharp halt. I saw that I was using religion in such a way that my very character was endangered. Then came the third crisis. Now I faced the practical responsibilities of a great trust. I saw that I must depend upon God as if that were the only experience in the world. I saw that I must live as carefully as if I were depending upon myself for moral peace. At that moment I found the way in which ethics and religion unite to produce the full life."

We may put all this in a couple of sentences. The world of ethics is a world of

self-dependence. The world of religion is a world of dependence upon God. And that dependence upon God commits one to the kind of life he would approve in the world. Religion frees a man from this torturing burden of depending upon his own ethical resources. It does not free him from the necessity of carving his life into the highest and completest form. In a man's terrible moral fight at first he meets the masterful ethical imperative alone. In religion he still meets that imperative. But he meets it not alone, but with the help of God. And all a man's long and difficult fight for righteousness is leading him to the place where he will see that it is God's fight as well as his own, and will share the burden of it with the greater Master of life.

Once in the mountains of Greece there dwelt the mighty god of music. In a natural amphitheater among the hills he erected the first pipe organ ever made in all the world. He endowed it with the power to move its own keys. Then he departed upon a far journey. The organ, sensing its own power, began to lower its keys and give forth sound. Soon there was a discord.

More and more the organ tried to play itself. More and more terrible discords rent the air. At last the organ subsided into despairing silence. Then the god who made the organ returned. He touched its keys with his masterful, sympathetic hands. Soft and low, and tender, and sweet the music came forth. Then it mounted in powerful crescendos. It flamed forth in clarion notes of power. It wailed with human sadness. It sang with human joy. The very passion and the very glory of life were poured forth in majestic sound. The god who made the organ could bring marvelous music from the instrument. But the organ could not play itself.

The God who made the organ must play it. That is the deepest and most far-reaching secret of life.

CHAPTER XIII

THE COMPLETION OF MORALITY IN RELIGION

A YOUNG radical who was fond of describing himself as a philosophical anarchist was walking along the seashore with a friend. He was talking rapidly and gesticulating vigorously as he described his view of life. He brought it all to a conclusion in one swift epigrammatic sentence: "I believe," he said, "in a society made perfect by good manners and not by good laws."

His friend smiled rather whimsically, and then replied: "I see that you are a good deal like the apostle Paul."

"What do you mean by that?" inquired the breathless and astonished apostle of freedom.

"Well," replied the other, "Paul's whole active life was an endeavor to get people to do the right thing because they loved to do it, and not because they felt they ought to do it. That was what he meant by the dis-

tinction between being under the law and under grace. The thing he got out of religion is the thing you would get out of social revolution."

Extremes do meet in the strangest of ways. Just as Quakers are passive anarchists, so Christians who belong to the long continuity of the historic experience of their religion hold priceless the very spontaneous qualities of living, the desire for which forms the real and abiding element of worth in all those radical systems which cry for emancipation. The difficulties with the ethical life *per se* are many. It tends to become mechanical. It tends to harden and become cold and rigid. It has seeds of unlovely self-consciousness. It may easily become a binding slavery. On the other hand, religion delivers from self-consciousness. It has deep and rich elements of spontaneous inspiration. It is warm and glowing and energizing. But at this point a serious question emerges. Does religion mean the overthrow of morals, or does it mean the completion and the fulfillment of the moral demand? Does it lead to the freedom of a spontaneous and eager virtue, or to the freedom of a de-

lirious and hectic vice? We know that there have been religions which were allied with vice. We know that their hot intensity has disintegrated and corrupted the life of the people who practiced their rites. We know that they gave the sensations of a delusive freedom while they were binding men in a deeper slavery. We know that they offered an escape from law into lawlessness, only to reveal at last the tragic grip of that regal law which they sought to ignore. As Gilbert Chesterton said once, in his telling way, "The man who jumps from a cliff does not break the law of gravitation; he only illustrates it." So the religions which involved the apotheosis of vice did not break the moral law. They only illustrated it. They left prostrate people helpless and broken. The freedom which they offered was the freedom of decay. The life they gave was that hideous life you find in a dead body in process of corruption.

Again we come face to face with life's great ethical dilemma. On the one hand we have the self-conscious Pharisee or the nervous, driven slave of the moral law; on the other the careless voluptuary, whose very prac-

tice of freedom is a gradual suicide. Is there any other way? Is there a life as white as the shining dreams of the moralist, and as spontaneous and free as the dreams of the social revolutionist? Is there any type of experience in which righteousness and freedom have kissed each other?

The answer to these questions comes like the break of day after a dark night. And the answer is found in the experience of ethical religion. Here the worshiper is one who has been delivered from all the tragic self-consciousness of depending upon himself. He has found the peace and the gladness and the creative energy of a great trust. He has discovered the secret of a glowing and eager life. And at the very moment he has found a new commitment to all the interests of righteousness. He is not delivered from virtue. He is delivered into a free and spontaneous virtue. Morality has become transfigured. That moral law which he had tried to obey as a slave he now meets as a friend. The strategy of ethical religion is this: It sets virtue to music, and changes morality from a stern demand to a passionate devotion. After men have the Ten Com-

mandments they need not a new code, but a new attitude. Put the fire of love under the Ten Commandments, and they glow with warm and inviting energy. They are like the bush which, though burning, was not consumed. Ethics alone give you a program. Ethical religion gives you a devotion.

"Only when the sun of love
Melts the scattered rays of thought,
Only when we live above
What the dim-eyed world has taught,
Only when our souls are fed
By the fount which gave them birth,
And by inspiration led
Which they never drew from earth,
We like parted drops of rain,
Swelling till they meet and run,
Shall be all absorbed again,
Melting, flowing into one."

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

AMID the confused and clamoring voices which are lifted in discussion of the relation between Christianity and the war there is a genuine danger that we may even lose our way. Some men would have us believe that the Christian religion is quite buried beneath the rubbish of the conflict. A world which Christianity failed to master has repudiated it forever. Some men would have us believe that the war is the supreme revelation of the world's need for Christianity. In a world which had taken Christ seriously such a war would have been impossible. The supreme hearing for Christianity will come in the days which lie just ahead. Some men would have us believe that men have passed beyond the circle of ideas represented by the Christian religion. It has ceased to be a question of truth or a question of falsehood. The contemporary man simply feels that the Christian faith speaks in an archaic language

which he does not understand, and which he does not care to understand. It is absolutely unable to command his interest. It is even unable to command his attention. Some men would have us believe that a Christianity which dares to be true to its own audacious idealism will grip men's lives in a fashion unknown even in the great old days of religious enthusiasm. We have made Christianity commonplace, they declare, by ignoring its reckless and furious venturesomeness. We have emasculated our faith, and we wonder at the failure of the distorted creature we have offered to men passionately alive and passionately eager for great adventure and great achievement. There are many other sorts of voices. The sound of bursting shells is in many of them. The hatred of anything which explodes—except as an exploding idea—is in some of them. They are immensely interesting, and they are very well worth understanding. But to a mind not sophisticated they are disconcerting and bewildering.

If we stand back a little from this maelstrom of madly antagonistic ideas, we may find a place of safety and clear vision. And

our own approach will be along the line of that analysis which we have been pursuing in these articles. The very genius of the religious attitude was expressed long ago by an American poet in the memorable line, "If my bark sink, 'tis to another sea." This sense of an eternal and dependable and finally adequate resting place has the glow and the quiet assurance and the venture of faith which are inherent in religion. But, after all, there is something not quite satisfying about "another sea." It is vast and glorious, and one may sail far upon it; but it is very vague and too expansive to command one's entire affection. Some religions fail just because they offer the hungry life nothing which is nobly definite and concrete. Some religions fail because, while they are very concrete indeed, the thing they offer is full of sharp and terrible burrs. A bad God is worse than no God at all, and after a careful study of the whole situation one does not find it impossible to understand Lucretius's feeling that atheism is freedom; that is, when the alternative to atheism is a worship of deified cruelty and vice and capriciousness. If a religion is bad, we do not want it. If a

religion is cruel, we repudiate it. If a religion is a sunny glow of exquisite ideals, we feel that it mocks us unless these radiant dreams of goodness and beauty come to some sharp and mastering contact with the rude world where we dwell.

Now, the strategic power of the Christian religion lies just at this point. All its ideals are alive. They walk the earth. They look to us through human eyes. They speak to us through human lips. They smile upon us in the glory of actually unselfish deeds. They break their way into human life in the wonder of the one life which has ever seized the end of the rainbow and fastened it to the earth. Ideals are transformed when they are incarnated in an actual human life. The glory of the Christian religion is just that it offers us a person, and a personal relationship, and in the flash of the light of it suddenly we see all high and distant things become human and near. We have passed forever from the welter where gods are deified vices. We have come at last to a Deity who is infinite virtue made human and glowing and full of the joy of friendly and loving adventure in the world of men.

But more than this. All the breaking of the divine into human life becomes supremely mastering as it bends to meet the pang of unutterable suffering. It is not only truth made personal. It is truth made sacrificial. It is truth made redemptive. The pang of an infinite heartbreak makes our thought of God wistfully tender, and gives the suffering God a capacity to seize our lives with an unfailing hold. Our own ethical struggles, as we have already seen, lead up to the place where we must escape into the peace of a great trust. The Christian religion offers an object of trust beyond our thought or hope, but with the most amazing power to answer every hungry outreach of our need. A law, even a divine law, would terrify us. A person who is the divine law active in tender, loving, painful rescue wins our mind and heart, masters our will, and releases within us the energies of a new life.

Now, the experience of world-wide pain in the last four years has created a world-wide inarticulate outreach for just such a message as this. There have been so many Gethsemanes that the world is ready to understand Gethsemane. There have been so

many Calvaries that the world is ready to understand Calvary. There is a larger exposed sensitive surface ready for the imprint of the Christian religion than the world has known in a hundred years. The religion of the adventurous suffering God going forth on his painful and terrible campaign for the rescue of men speaks to the deepest and most quickened consciousness of contemporary life.

CHAPTER XV

PAUL AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

In those striking and intense letters torn from the heart of the experience of the apostle Paul we have a series of documents of the utmost importance. The very fact that, despite the layers upon layers of commonplace comment with which they have been overlaid by centuries of dull and industrious commentators, they have managed to maintain a certain flash of human vitality, and a deep glow of spiritual fire, indicates at once how remarkable they are. Here was a man who had that spiritual audacity which dares to fight life's typical battles through to their actual conclusion. Here is a moral and spiritual adventurer who makes his own trails, and finds memorable contact with flesh and kindling reality. The very sharpness of his perceptions, the very momentum of his life, the very passion of his quest, make him at once the most individual and the most

typical of men. He is the most individual because the vivid and jagged angles of his own personality are all the while amazingly present in everything he does and in everything he writes. He is the most typical because he simply carries out in their full meaning those personal struggles which are common to men, but which are turned from in bewilderment and confusion by masses of people before they ever learn what they really mean. Paul's perennial appeal lies in the fact that as you read his masterful, headlong revelation of his own inner life you are all the while learning the meaning of your own.

The psychology of Paul is, if possible, more important than his theology. And this just because it is the source of his theology. What happened to him is the basis of all that powerful interpretation which came from him. And one will never really understand the content of his teaching who does not understand the whole whirling movement in his own experience by which it all became compelling to him. The attempt to understand Paul's theology without having the slightest sympathetic apprehension of the significance

of the psychology of his own experience has led to no end of confusion. Paul's ethical and spiritual biography is the one essential commentary upon his writings. Now, what did really happen to Paul? The answer is that he began by trying to make a home of a half-way house. He accepted the finality of a faith which was not final. He thought he had reached his goal at the end of the first section of his journey. And in doing all this he was meeting an experience whose form was characteristic of him and his people and his time, but whose essential quality emerges wherever there are human beings to live and aspire and to struggle. When he found the difference between a half-way house and a home he made a discovery which is of significance to all men.

Let us go back to his own burning words, and sense for a moment the meaning and the quality of his experience. He began with no end of things in his favor. He had from heredity and immediate environment the propulsion of a great moral and spiritual incentive. He was born in the interior of the world's purest faith. He grew up with its solemn sanctions quivering in his respon-

sive consciousness every day and every night. He gave himself to it all, with an abandon of enthusiasm. He went to the capital of the world's cleanest religion, and he give his life to the service of a God with a character, a God for whose misdeeds his votaries never needed to blush. He became the servant of the God who is righteousness alive. All this sounds splendid and conclusive. But Paul did not find it so. The more he gave himself to God and to duty the more restless he became. The more faithfully he tried to keep the sacred law of his people the more his heart was torn by a bewildering unrest. And all this was accentuated by the sight of the despised followers of a condemned and executed Criminal who by every sight eye could see possessed that very serenity of inner peace which the young Pharisee sought in vain. All moral sanctions seemed turned upside down. Why should these wretches be happy while he was torn by unspeakable conflicts of torturing spiritual unrest? He tried to crush out his own inner pain. He hounded the men and women of the despised sect with cruel and implacable hatred. Then suddenly at the heart of his battle the

day itself was dim at noonday in the presence of the mastering conviction which came to him that these despised men possessed the secret for which he longed. With that violence of decision and self-commitment which characterized his intense life, he flung his whole being in an abandon of trust in the very arms of that crucified Master whose mastery he had scorned. Then he broke away to Arabia for those months of inner examination in which he would find what it was really all about, in which he would master the meaning of his own experience.

His letters tell the story of what he discovered. They tell it when he desires to make it known, and they tell it when he does not even know that he is telling it at all. In his old days of unrest he had all the while been trying to earn peace. He had thought of it as something he could wrest from the Almighty by his own tremendous effort; and the harder he had tried the more he had failed. He had failed because peace does not come in that way. Then he had turned from the lash of the law to the friendly mastery of Jesus Christ. He had bent his will to the way of trust. And suddenly all the

peace he had sought in vain came flooding into his soul. Suddenly he knew that life's secret is not in what we do for God, but in what God does for us. It is the deed of flinging one's whole life upon the great strength of God in a mighty act of trust which is the central and defining act of human life. And the compulsion which draws forth that act of trust is the personal impact of the life and death of Christ upon the quivering and struggling soul. That act of trust is a creative act. It releases a thousand unsuspected energies in the soul. It connects the life with the one dynamic and inspiring personality whose power in the soul transfigures ethics and changes a moral struggle into a spontaneous act of devotion.

These were the great and imperial relationships to Paul. These things happened in him, and they came from him as an evangel, as a theology, as a program for the world. To him they were the vindication of the Christian religion. Judaism was a half-way house full of significant memories. Christianity was the home of his soul.

CHAPTER XVI

AUGUSTINE AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

THE man who held the mind of the church in his hand for a thousand years must have been a good deal of a man. In fact, he was a good deal of two men. One of them was the father of the church of the Middle Ages, the other was the father—at least one of the fathers—of the Reformation. One was a churchman, the other was an evangelical Christian. Augustine, in other words, represents the trunk of the tree of Christianity before the branches of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism had grown apart. In another sense he was two men, only this time successively and not simultaneously. He was a brilliant, tempestuous, passionate North African who felt the lure of the hot vices of his day, and who knew their taste. He was a strong and masterful Christian who had learned great secrets of self-mastery before

he set forth to master others. He was a man dimly seeking a religion, and then he became a man who in the most vivid and gripping way had found a religion which completely dominated his thought, his feelings, and his actions. He is worth knowing for no end of reasons, most of all for one reason, and that is this: most of the things which happened to him are typical. They keep happening. Some of them have happened to us, others of them may happen to us, and still others ought to happen to us if we are really to find our way through the maze of the world.

The literary men are all Greeks. They are not all Greeks in the sense of beautiful harmony and the capacity to achieve it in serene and noble form, but they are all Greeks in the sense of the apt words of Saint Luke. They are all the while seeking some new thing. The moment a thing has been said with a sort of final power they contradict it. Otherwise how could there be any future for letters? Life does not share this quality of the men of the darting pen. Life is all the while reverting to deep and typical and significant experiences. Life is

new principally in the sense that it is new to you. It is original in the genuine and only true sense of going back to the original meanings of things. A new moon is simply a new experience of an old moon. We still have eyes, nose, tongue, and ears; and what does not come through the ancient avenues of physical approach is in the most literal meaning of the word without sense. Going more deeply we find that certain great experiences are so characteristic of living, and growing, and struggling men that a life is less than entirely normal if it does not meet them. These things are not new, but they are vital. They do not gleam with the fury of a new sort of conflagration. They burn with that ancient fire without which life would not be able to continue. They are as fresh and wonderful as babies, who manage to be surprising in spite of all the babies that have been before. They are as full of wonder as sunsets, which manage to edge the days with splendor in spite of the fact that they must use the same old sun.

Augustine knew the full throbbing intoxication of being alive in a world where every sense was summoned by a thousand allur-

ing voices. He flung himself into the maelstrom of experience. He met the heat on the outside by heat within, and he literally burned his way through his tropical world. Then he made a tragic discovery. If you burn long enough, you will burn up. If you set things on fire, you will have light and heat first, but after that you will have dust and ashes. When Augustine got the first sordid and disillusioning taste of ashes, his tongue writhed in horror and his happiness departed. There were still things to burn, however, and Augustine turned once and again from the bad taste in his mouth to the fascination of the fire. He became a pilgrim seeking he scarcely knew for what, perhaps seeking something which could be burned without being consumed. But for a long time Augustine found no burning bush.

At last the brilliant and fascinating North African made a discovery. He faced the ugly fact that with all his mental and personal gifts he was the slave of his own desires. He thought with shame of the men so far beneath him in ability who were his lords in self-control. They were Christians, and through them he saw Christianity from a

new angle. To be sure, he had grown up with it. But the things with which we grow up are very often just the things which we do not understand. Then there was Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan. His serene and stately dignity, his massive character, and the poise of his wise and fearless and far-reaching administration, the glow in his eyes and the richness in his voice telling with such unconscious eloquence of the wonder of an inner communion—all these said strange and summoning things to the restless man of the world who had learned so many of the ugly, sad secrets with which the world can soil a human life. Augustine could think clearly. He did think honestly. He saw that he could not organize his own life into ethical victory or serenity of spirit. He saw that this very thing was done by the mastering presence of the Saviour of his mother's religion. He brought his weakness to the strength of Christ. He flung his life into the arms of the great Helper of Men. He found inner power. He even found a secret of fire which could burn forever with no conflagration at all. He did not lose passion out of his life. He was delivered

from low passions into the rich experience of a permanent and upbuilding passion which kept his whole life resilient and responsive and full of creative energy. No wonder that he cried out: "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our souls are restless until they find rest in Thee." The sentence was not a pious generalization. It was a bit of flaming autobiography. With every fiber of his being acutely sensitive and ready in response, Augustine had learned the meaning of the Christian religion as a vital and mastering experience. It was none the less full of fresh wonder because Paul had walked in the same way before. Great music does not lose its beauty because some one else can appreciate it. This music of a redemptive experience was as marvelous to Augustine as if no one had ever heard it before. In religion the old and adequate has a way of becoming the new and transforming. In any event we must accustom ourselves to the fact that H_2O has a way of constituting water. And there is the same continuity in the constituent elements of the water of life.

CHAPTER XVII

LUTHER AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

A BELLIGERENT priest of the Roman Catholic Church is said to have declared that Martin Luther is responsible for the great war which has just closed. The claim suggests many interesting paths of investigation. And it can hardly be denied that the Luther who depended upon benevolent princes for the establishment of his work and the Luther who encouraged the merciless crushing of the peasants' revolt can hardly be said to have been a particularly happy exponent of democracy. However this may be, these things do not introduce us to the Luther who changed the intellectual, and moral, and spiritual map of Europe. The Luther who was the presiding genius of the German Reformation at its moments of most commanding vitality was in no sense a cause of the present war. The Luther who, in the name of the integrity of

his own inner life, defied emperor and pope at the Diet of Worms was something better than a theorist declaring the principles of democracy. He was democracy alive.

Probably no modern man can appreciate what that hour at the Diet of Worms really cost Luther. To us the spectacle of a man standing up in the name of the completest loyalty to his own life is no strange or startling spectacle. Luther himself has had a profound relation to the fact that we are not startled by an intense and fully loyal individualism. But the world in which Luther was born was not the world we know. In that world the individual had no meaning except as a part of an organism greater than he. As a Christian he had no significance apart from the church. As a citizen he had no significance apart from the state. So when Luther stood out against both church and state in the name of the meaning of his own life, he turned upside down every characteristic conception of his age. Men whose minds had been molded in that older world felt about it as we would feel if a man's right arm were suddenly to issue a declaration of independence, declaring that the tyrannies

of the body had left it no resource but to go forth and live a life of its own. The most penetrating question we can ask about Luther is this: Being the man he was, trained in the life out of which he came, how did he ever dare to place his own life boldly over against the combined solidarities of church and state?

The question must be answered gradually and progressively. In the first place, Luther had not the slightest interest in self-assertion merely for the sake of self-assertion. He was not a philosophic individualist who, without anything in particular to assert, had made up his mind to assert it, though the heavens fell. On the contrary, he believed in solidarity so deeply and so naturally that a break with the existing organism of ecclesiastical and secular life was like tearing one of his organs from his body. But something had happened to him. It was something so deep and so wonderful and so transforming that he knew he must be loyal to it, though the world fell to bits about him. His deepest ethical and spiritual experience made him an individualist at Worms. He was not a man who, having no experience of

any significance, set out to find some experience under the flag of a revolting individualism. Some modern men may find words in which quite without excitement they can describe the experience of Luther. It was not so with him. He quivered with the amazement of it. He gave the sharpest loyalty to it. The one dramatic, bewildering, central matter in life to him was his personal experience of the grace of God.

All this would be very important just because the thing which shook Luther shook Europe, but it is important for another reason. This thing happened to Luther, not because he was a German. It came to him not because he was a reformer. It came to him not because he was a sort of incarnation of some of the deepest things in the life of the sixteenth century. It came to him because he was a man. It came to him because as a man he came into contact with fundamental realities of the ethical and spiritual life. Because this is true, Luther's fight is our fight and Luther's victory is our victory. We pronounce the name "Luther," but we know that it is only when we have slipped our own name there in place

of his that we have come to the real heart of the matter as it concerns our own lives. Part of the framework of the experience was sixteenth century. The essence of it has no century because it belongs to every century. When we call Luther Everyman we have said the really defining word.

The church in which Luther grew up was a sort of rebaptized Judaism. It offered to Luther very much the sort of thing offered to the eager young Saul by the Old Testament church at Jerusalem. Many of the names were changed, but the emphasis was that of a religious morality, rather than of a glowing religious spirit inevitably coming forth as a new way of life as well as a new vision of God. To be sure, there were evangelical Christians in the church of the Middle Ages. Anselm knew the secret of evangelical religion. Bernard of Clairvaux knew it. Francis of Assisi sang with the joy of it. But in spite of all this the prevailing conceptions were not those which had the creative splendor of the evangel in them. And the task which the young Augustinian monk Luther set before himself was essentially the task of earning

God's favor. He walked in the very steps of the young man Saul. No man ever tried harder. No man ever gave himself in more whole-souled devotion to the endeavor. And so doing Luther found everything but peace. He won a reputation for piety, he amazed his brethren in the monastery, but his heart gnawed away with the torture of his restless soul. Then one day a sentence leaped from the New Testament and struck his eyes like a thrust of light. The sentence was Paul's great word, "The just shall live by faith." At length the meaning of it was clear to the young Augustinian. Peace was not something you earned. Peace was something God gave to you. You seized it by a leaping act of trust. You did not procure it by endless and difficult deeds. He opened his mind to the thought. He opened his heart to it. He opened his whole soul to the experience. And such a creative energy came into his life, such a singing rapture of new manhood was his, that in the name of it he was ready to defy the emperor and the pope. All Europe was to feel the thrill of it. The Jew on the road to Damascus, the hot-blooded North African, and the vigorous German

were different men, and they lived in different ages, but one transforming experience made the world over again for each of the three.

CHAPTER XVIII

WESLEY AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

THE precise little Oxford scholar who transformed the England of the eighteenth century is still very much alive. The currents of influence which he set in motion have moved to the ends of the earth. Probably no Englishman has lived a life more opulently productive. Marlborough fought, Johnson talked, and Wesley lived his life into the very heart of the age and of the ages which were to follow. Deism, with its absent God, its self-sufficient man, and its staid and self-conscious dread of enthusiasm, had produced an England cold and cheerless and unkindled. Wesley left an England with the fires of the spirit all burning, an England standing reverently before the bush which was burning but not consumed. In a sense what John Wesley did was to take his own spiritual autobiography and write it large over England. What hap-

pened in him is the explanation of all that happened through him. So it comes to pass that one of the most interesting journeys which the candid and exploring historian can take is the journey into the inner life of this eighteenth-century scholar of Lincoln College.

The first Wesley you meet is infinitely in earnest, wonderfully faithful to a thousand minute duties, startlingly methodical in the observance of every conceivable moral and spiritual exercise, spiritually self-centered, preaching to others in order to save himself, hot on the trail of following his ideal, and withal torn by inner unrest and a sort of cumulative dissatisfaction with all that he is and all that he does. He had the courage of his idealism, however. When one experiment failed he made another. He went off to America to save himself by giving religion to the Indians. He was austerely faithful, but he came back with the cankerworm still gnawing at his heart. The more he tried to work his way into the kingdom of God the more completely he failed. He looked with astonishment and envy at the people who had found that inner

serenity, that organizing principle for their lives for which he sought in long and fruitless endeavor. At last there came a night of destiny in Aldersgate Street. The experience of Paul as Paul himself related it was in the minds of the worshipers. Paul had fought the same fight long ago. And Luther's exposition of Paul's experience was read aloud to the worshipers that night. Luther too had had the same difficult and torturing experience. And when Luther's interpretation of Paul's experience was read in Wesley's hearing it was as if the ages met in his soul. The meaning of it all flashed across his mind, and flamed into his life. Then it was that his "heart was strangely warmed." Then it was that a methodical, ineffective man was made captain of all the mighty resources of his own spirit. Then it was that there was released the energy which was to transform England.

Wesley lived to be an old man. Perpetually his relation to reality was mediated by the vitalizing truth which had burned its way into his experience on that memorable night. Christianity was not what he did for God. It was what Christ did

in him. That leap of adventurous trust by which he cast his past and present and future into the arms of Christ was the central and perpetually renewed act of his life. He made the meaning of it all clear to others. The passion and the power of it swept through the country with a startling momentum. The religion of personal adventure on the grace of God, the religion of vital experience of the presence of God, once more moved potently into the life of the world.

To Wesley Christianity became a program. But primarily it was the amazing adventure which flung itself forth in an abandon of trust in the invisible, saving God. It involved an organization. It was primarily a new vitality. It related itself to every issue of human life. But first of all it was a fountain of energy playing in a man's soul. And to Wesley too the great secret was yours when you stopped trying to do everything yourself, and bent your life into the purpose of God that he might care for you forever.

Paul, Augustine, Luther, and Wesley were very different in temperament and very different in all the incidentals of life.

The brilliant young first-century Jew, the passionate North African with the heat of his land in his blood, the hearty and genial sixteenth-century German, and the cautious mathematically minded Englishman—how utterly unlike they are! Yet each had the same fundamental experience. Each discovered the same great secret. Each released influences which have profoundly modified the life of the whole world. The thing which a man cannot do for himself God is ready to do for him. This was the truth which like a sudden sunrise illumined their sky. They were made for God, and their hearts were restless until they found rest in him. And they found it, and with it a productive energy of the most practical and far-reaching character.

Here we are, then, after a great war, full of the enthusiasm for discovery of an eager and restless age. And in the men of whom we have been writing the ages speak to us. For the real significance of these men is that their experience is typical, that they met the problems involved in the very structure of man's life, and that they found solutions which are eternally valid. The range of the

application of these solutions is infinitely varied. The fresh amazement of them is the experience of the man who goes forth to the great adventure for himself. And so past and present meet. The sunrise is an old fact, but it is a perpetually new experience.

And so we come to a demand which may well test our courage. The courage of the man who can wed the best of the past to the greatest in the present is a heroism of a very high order. And the man who lets the ages speak to him as he goes out into the new age, as he hears a thousand voices asking him to accept the freshness of unanalyzed phrases instead of the bits of pure gold at the heart of human experience, must be a man of wonderful poise as well as a man of tremendous strength of personality.

In any event the dignified little Oxford man of the eighteenth century seems curiously vital when you come near to him. He has a way of slipping out of that older age and peering cautiously into our own. He does not seem abashed or ill at ease. He seems wonderfully certain that his secret is the secret we most need.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DEEPEST NOTE IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Two men were sitting in a pleasant room lined with shelves, from which books looked down in friendly fashion. They were talking over some of life's deepest experiences, and because they were men who understood and trusted each other, they spoke quite simply and without reserve. "When I was a young man," said one of them, "I read all the books I could lay my hands on which told the story of the actual religious experience of men and women. Sometimes I wonder if I was wise. It all gave me no end of trouble. I never read of any aspect of Christian experience which was foreign to me without thinking that there was something the matter with my Christian life, or I would have had that experience too. I thought that every emotion and every rapture which had ever come to any Christian

ought to come my way if I was really a Christian myself."

His friend smiled a little whimsically and half sadly. "How many men have had just that difficulty!" he said. "It is a notable day when we learn that as there were many roads which led to Rome, so there are many roads which lead to the city of God. The great question has to do with the direction in which one is traveling, and not with the kind of trees which cast shade over the highway or of the variety of flowers which one finds along the way."

We are all coming to understand the place for the play of differences of temperament and of individual approach and quality in the experience of the things of God. We have learned that there is something personal and distinctive about the spiritual growth of every human being. We have learned too that there are great types which you can detect and classify. We are beginning to delight in the variety and range and richness of the possibilities of the inner experience of the Christian. We have learned that every man must move out along the line of his own real development, and that he

must not try to force his inner life into any particular type, however noble. So is the religious life kept sane, and wholesome, and normal, and real.

Just because this is true sometimes we are in danger of forgetting that although there are many types of Christians and there are many types of Christian experience, they are not all equally profound, and they are not all equally penetrating in respect of the deepest matters of the Christian faith. And when we come to interpret Christianity we must keep in mind its most potent and characteristic forms. We are not going to force these forms upon anyone who is not psychologically ready for them, but we are not going to interpret our religion from any point of appraisal where its full dynamic energy is beyond our view. We are not going to insist that the author of the New Testament book of James was not a Christian because he did not have a Pauline experience. But, on the other hand, we are not going to try to bring the vastness of Paul's inner life within the categories brought within our reach by the experience which is reflected by the book of James.

When we ask, then, "What is the deepest note in the Christian religion?" we do not mean to try to find a standard which shall be artificially applied to those whose whole experience does not yet move within the circle of its relationships. We do mean to try to see what was the quality, and what is the quality, of that Christian experience which is most deeply potent in the inner life, and which releases the most powerful energy upon the life of the world.

A recent historian, after describing Luther's powerful and transforming experience, makes the remark that this type of experience cannot be expected in every Christian. This is entirely true. It is also true that the leading of men to a place where that type of experience shall be psychologically feasible and nobly authentic to a larger number of men and women, is one of the real tasks of the church.

For religion at its most penetrating point of power does express itself through the type of experience which is common to Paul, to Augustine, to Luther, and to Wesley. The evangelical note is the deepest note in the Christian religion. The man who has

really found his structural incapacity to organize the forces of his own life into harmony and inner serenity and outer potency of activity; the man who has discovered the power of that vital personality of imperial creative energy—Jesus Christ—to do for him what he cannot do for himself; the man who has taken that leaping adventure of faith which has connected his life with all the potent energies of Christ—this man knows in his own experience the deep and central secret of the Christian religion.

Suppose a man finds that he can awaken no inner response to the whole circle of ideas with which we have been dealing. What is he to do? The answer is not really difficult. He is to begin with religion at the spot, wherever it is, where the message of religion strikes fire in his own consciousness. It may be that the program of Christ for the world arouses his enthusiastic approval, while he is cold in the presence of all the emphasis on the inner life which he finds in so many Christian writings. Then let him at once begin to do the will of Christ. The ultimate truths of religion are not for a moment to be confused with the immediate points of

contact which religion finds with a particular life. We are all to be true to our own unfolding personality. There were some questions Jesus did not lift until his disciples had known him for a long time. Sometimes the church is inclined to ask questions of novitiates at its portals which can be answered only by saints.

All this we heartily and eagerly admit and assert. But with the same breath we go on to say that the church needs to keep before it the summons and the challenge of those great typical and evangelical experiences which, after all, reveal the deepest meaning of the Christian faith.

CHAPTER XX

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

"CHRISTIANITY makes the moral law a friend, because the law looks at you through the eyes of Jesus Christ." A venerable professor who had gained and held the love of young men of many generations was speaking. He looked into the faces of the theological students before him for a moment, and then he added: "But the moral passion is always there. Only in Christianity it is glorified."

At the end of the class hour one of the men sought out the teacher. "I am not at all clear about this matter of the relation of ethics to the Christian religion," he said. "If Christianity transcends ethics, I do not see just how it is possible to speak of Christian ethics at all. Isn't it like speaking of advanced elementary mathematics?"

The teacher chuckled a little at the illustration. Then he replied: "We never outgrow ethics. We do outgrow depending

upon ourselves to solve the ethical problem. You never outgrow the Ten Commandments. You do outgrow keeping them as a matter of loyalty to an external demand. You do come to the place where you keep them because Christ has written them into the very structure of your life. The moral law was alive as an inspiring and dominant spirit in Jesus, and the more we open our lives to his work, the more it becomes true that the moral law is alive in us as a potent, breathing inspiration. To have the spirit of Jesus is to have a moral fire glowing in our lives all the while. In Christianity ethics ceases to be a matter of hard and slavish obedience, and becomes a matter of joyous and spontaneous loyalty."

There was a light of understanding in the student's eyes, but it was evident that he wanted to prolong the conversation. His teacher made a gesture of encouragement, and the young man continued:

"Then a man under the compulsion of ethics does a thing because he ought to do it, and a man under the compulsion of Christian ethics does the very same thing because he loves to do it."

"That is not half bad," said the teacher, heartily. "But that is not all of it. A man not only does the same things; he does more. The moral spirit of devotion has a searching quality as well as an inspiring quality. When a man loves he does many great things he would never think of doing without the inspiration of that devotion. Christian ethics, then, has to do with all the compulsion of the spirit of Christ in the activities of the men and women who have found life made over again through the potency of a great trust in the Saviour of the world."

The new life in Christ is indeed a new life of activity as well as a new life of inner experience. That which sings itself as a song of joy in the soul must come forth in noble and unselfish deeds in the world. All the potencies released in the heart must become potencies expressing themselves in the field of action. A new attitude becomes a new act. The heart of brotherhood inevitably inspires the hand of brotherhood. The new relation to God expresses itself in a new relation to men.

Now, the interpretation of the implications of the spirit of Christ as it works itself

out in lives renewed by the transforming experience of a leaping and continuous act of faith gives us the deepest and most defining matters in Christian ethics. But there are other ranges of the same great theme. The work of Jesus in the world has changed the whole meaning of life for many men and women who have not known the meaning of an evangelical experience. And all the ethically vitalizing potency of Christ in such lives and the new outlook upon all human relationships which comes to them must be included in Christian ethics. Then the whole world, as far as it is civilized, has come in a measure at least to look at no end of matters through the eyes of Jesus. And this world-wide influence of the personality of supreme power to kindle the ethical flame in men's lives must be interpreted in the treatment of Christian ethics which is in any sense comprehensive.

The important matter for the busy man to see is this: the moral passion has increased power in the Christian religion because all matters of moral demand are seen in the light of a personal relationship. You could never feel at home with an abstract law.

You can love a person who is the moral law alive. And, deepest of all, you can love a person who puts Calvary at the heart of the moral law. When that love comes forth in action, Christian ethics is functioning in the life of the world.

CHAPTER XXI

JESUS CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY

"RELIGIONS have been built about rituals. Religions have been built about ideas. But the greatest sort of religion can be built only about a person." A man who had traveled much and read widely and meditated much was speaking.

The friend who sat beside him, a devout Anglican, made reply: "In Christianity the person is the vehicle of the ideas and the master of the ritual."

"Sometimes he gets lost in the ideas and hidden by the ritual," the first speaker flashed back.

The personality of Christ is the greatest asset of the Christian religion. He illustrated and exemplified all its ideas. He is the embodiment of its principles. He turns its truths into passions, and is the realization of its ideals. He is the best starting

point for a man who would come into contact with the real meaning of Christianity, for it is the simplest and most natural of human experiences to get acquainted with a person. He is the last and highest reality of the faith to which he has given his name, for the more men know about him the more they sense new heights and unfathomable reaches of meaning in his life.

Whoever you are and whatever your experience, there is some spot of your life where the supreme figure of the New Testament meets you level-eyed and with intimate friendliness. You do not have to make some sort of journey to find him. He makes the journey and finds you. He is the most human of men, and as you watch him moving his intense and struggling way through the world you come to feel that he was so human that he understands men better than they understand themselves. The very way he has of telling wonderfully entertaining and significant stories makes you know that he missed nothing of human pang and hope and planning as he went through the world, and that he understood it all. As you watch him swinging down the road with the friends

who knew him best, you feel that here was a real man leading a real man's life.

Then, as you come to know him he begins to grow right before your eyes. The stainless warm beauty of his life amazes you. The passion of his purity dazzles you. The way he loses himself in the thought of others is like the lifting of a curtain, so that you have a sudden revelation of the glorious and noble thing life might be if we would all learn his amazing friendly passion. His words come forth with the cut of a knife, yet they have a tender gentleness beyond our thought of peace. They open doors and we behold the heavens. They bar the way and we stop short in the presence of moral tragedy which we had never understood before. As the days and the months pass we catch glimpses of hidden and far-reaching meanings. We begin to breathe the atmosphere in which he lives. We stand near to him as he girds himself to walk in the way of cruel pain. We learn as we gaze with awed and reverent eyes that he knew how to die as well as how to live. And as the thought of the millions of lads who have flung their lives away in a wonder of self-giving in the great

war comes to us, somehow we knew that his death in loftier fashion is set to a key which they would understand. Then we stand before a tomb which is empty. Gradually we understand that if this tomb is empty, the world is full of hope; and if this tomb is not empty, the world itself has become a barren place. We are swept by the whole meaning of the whole tale. We do not see it in parts. We see it altogether. And we see it over against the quality of human life and human struggle and the poignant intimate need of the world. We bare the deep secret places of our own lives to its surgery and to its healing. And all the while perception is changing into participation. Observation is changing into experience. Something begins to happen within us. And what he does in us makes what he did in the world believable and authentic. When the imperial Personality does an imperial work in a man's life that man sees the Personality and the religion which that Personality released in the world with new and understanding eyes. Christianity is kept alive in the world by the compulsion of the personality of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XXII

CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL ORGANISM

Two friends were having a vigorous tussle about historic Christianity. The critic had the floor.

"Christianity has made a curious mistake," he was saying. "It has been so busy with the drops of water that it never has seen the river. It has been so busy with the houses that it never has seen the city. It has been so busy with various parts that it never has seen the whole. It has been so entirely occupied in ministering to the individual that it has forgotten the need of society. And so the old evangelical Christianity has gone upon the rocks. Only a social gospel can get a hearing in our time."

Without hesitation the answer came: "There is a good deal of truth in what you say. But I should want to add that only an individual gospel can be a permanently successful social gospel. You have to make

individual men into brothers before there is any real hope of brotherhood in the world. The structural relations of men must be changed. But the structure of the inner life of the particular man needs to be changed as a prelude to his taking up the social task."

As a matter of fact there are few more tragic illustrations of the havoc wrought by the fallacy of "either-or" than the way in which we have put the individual and the social interpretations of Christianity over against each other. We have said: "Christianity is not this. It is that." Of course when we come to analyze the situation we see that Christianity is both this and that. It is a gospel of individual redemption. It is also a gospel of social transformation. And when it attempts to be one without being the other, there is pitiful failure. An evangelical Christian who does not give social expression to his inner experience becomes a hypocrite. A man with a social enthusiasm which is not based upon the passionate potency of a new life within has a program without an adequate dynamic. He is likely to become a cynic at last.

When we turn to the Bible we find that

the group consciousness was much earlier than the individual consciousness. The eighth-century prophets are all the while talking about the nation, about the group. It is only in the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel that the sense of the significance of the individual emerges. In the teaching of Jesus the two ideas lie side by side. He is all the while ministering to the individual life, and feeling the supreme strategy of its inner relations. He pronounces the word of forgiveness, and then he speaks the word of bodily healing. The inner and the outer are together in his thought. But he rises from the individual. He is all the while talking about a kingdom. He came to found a new social organism. Life is not exhausted in individual relationships. It comes to fullness in an organic social structure. "I am the vine. Ye are the branches," expressed a view of the constitution of the Christian religion in the world which is essentially social, and is vitally organic. If Jesus came to make a new man, he also came to make a new race. If he came to rescue the individual, he also came to transform society. Love is essentially a social

quality, and so Napoleon said with a flash of discernment, "The kingdom of Jesus is the kingdom of love."

To be sure, Christianity is so rich and ample a thing that few Christians have realized all its corollaries. And the call to the church to apprehend the unrealized logic of its own positions is perpetually needed. An investigation of the unsuspected implications of Christianity is a task to which each age is called afresh. Like the blind men who went to see the elephant, men are likely to insist that Christianity is no more than the piece of it with which they have come into contact. But Christianity, like the love of God, is broader than the measure of man's mind. And the thoughtful student is astonished to see the fashion in which progress lies along the line of discoveries within the Christian religion rather than outside of it. At all events, the social passion is at the very heart of the Christian position. It is implicit in every valid individual experience of the love of Christ. It is Christianity which is to make society truly and permanently organic.

CHAPTER XXIII

WHAT CHRISTIANITY BRINGS TO CONTEMPORARY LIFE

"CHRISTIANITY is a memory. It has ceased to be a hope. Jerusalem cannot command London. Nazareth has no message for New York. The only Bethlehem which is significant to-day has to do with steel profits and not with baby prophets. Syria has dropped below the mental horizon of Europe." So spoke a man who had definitely repudiated the Christian faith, and his epigrams were greeted with a round of applause from a group of like-minded men. There are people not a few alive to-day who believe, some of them with a wistful sadness at the thought, that Christianity has ceased to be a creative force in the world. On the other hand there are multitudes of people who find life's problems solved and the world filled with a new bright hope because of the impact of the Christian religion upon their lives. They are not disconcerted and they

are not deeply alarmed at the present situation. They have a deep and unshakable conviction that whatever the vicissitudes of the world argument, Christianity always has the last word.

We have already seen in this series of discussions that Christianity has such a structural relation to the very constitution of human life that the only way to outgrow the Christian religion would be to outgrow human nature itself. When men can see without organs of sight, and hear without auditory organs, and the elemental relationships of humanity are transformed, you will have a physical parallel to the situation where the fullest contact with God can be attained without Christianity as the organ of that contact. Christianity, like its founder, is the perpetual contemporary of succeeding generations, and it looks in upon them all level-eyed.

While all this is true, it remains to be said that the religion founded by Jesus has the most wonderful way of finding a point of contact with the distinctive characteristics of every age, and of bringing supplement to that age at just the points where

it is most incomplete. And from this point of view we may suggest some of the elements of interpretation and of guidance which the Christian religion brings to contemporary life.

Our age has the most thorough appreciation of the vital man. It knows the value of the salesman as that value never has been known before. It knows the value of the man whose compelling presentation can gain adequate publicity and friendly consideration for the thing which he is advocating. The man of forceful magnetic power, quick of mind, effective in speech, and adequate in action, is the man of the hour. And at this point Christianity speaks in the very vernacular of the age. It is all the while working to create new vitality. It comes that men may have life. It sharpens their minds, and quickens their consciences, and strengthens their wills, and reinforces their whole personality. The contemporary world appreciates the vital man. Christianity produces him. The forces against which Christianity fights are the forces which dull the eye, and make the mind heavy, and the conscience sluggish, and the will stupid with

lethargy, and the whole personality ineffective. So it comes about that the greatest ally of the contemporary ideal of masterful and dynamic manhood is the Christian religion.

On the other hand, there is a tendency which is very widespread to lose the mass of men in the machinery with which they are working. If the organizer and the man in control is to be a man of infinite resiliency and force, too often it happens that the majority of the men who move through the round of necessary labor are thought of as mere wheels and belts in the vast machine. It is one thing to use a typewriter. It is another thing to become a typewriter. It is one thing to use a mechanical tool. It is another thing to become a mechanical tool. It is one thing to use a freight train. It is another thing to become a freight train. Somehow the individual man everywhere must be rescued from the tyranny of the machine with which he works if there is to be a good future for the world. And here it is that Christianity comes with fresh eyes and eager hands to save contemporary life from the weakness which is in a fashion a

by-product of its own strength. Christianity never loses sight of the individual man. Christianity perpetually emphasizes his dignity and his worth. Christianity insists with ceaseless energy that the machine must be the servant of the man, and that the man must not be caught in the coils of the vast machine. This insistence and this spirit is at last to transform the industry of the world. For machinery was made for man and not man for machinery.

The contemporary world is a new world in many regards, and is flushed with the wonder of its own victories over nature. But it is a world with sharp and crying thirst, and Christianity is a deep well with ample resources of fresh and cooling and satisfying water to assuage the parched lips of an age already weary in the midst of its achievement. The water of life, in this profound sense, must still be drawn from the wells of salvation.

CHAPTER XXIV

WHAT CONTEMPORARY LIFE BRINGS TO CHRISTIANITY

A LITTLE group of world-seasoned travelers, and readers, and writers was sitting around a table in a comfortable room. They had been talking of many things, and at last their conversation moved into the realm of the things of the Spirit and their relation to practical life.

"We used to think that religion ought to teach us how to live," said one of them. "I am coming to feel that life ought to teach us how to be religious. We used to think that religion ought to master men. Now we are beginning to see that men ought to master religion."

A tremendously vigorous discussion followed these words. Some of the men maintained that the one final element in the successful organization of life is the sense of vital authority which religion at its highest brings to men. Others claimed that author-

ity is the perpetual stultification of originality and ought to be repudiated everywhere and all the time. At last one of them, a man who had been silent during the war of words, made his way into the conversation.

"I remember," he said, "that Lord Robert Cecil once said regretfully of a certain government that it had been losing in moral authority. That sort of loss is dangerous in a government. It is fatal to religion. But the note of moral mastery is by no means inconsistent with the heartiest receptiveness to every real and productive thing in contemporary life."

The truth is that every age has something to give to religion as well as something to receive from religion. Or, to put it in the terms of the one religion most closely connected with civilization, every age has something to give to Christianity as well as something priceless to receive from Christianity. The experience of an age is not to count for nothing; and the Christian heritage becomes richer with every passing century. From this point of view it is a matter of singular interest to ask, What is the contribution

which contemporary life is to make to religion?

First of all we may say that there is the spirit of scientific candor. There is a wonderful sincerity in Christianity. But the candor which the long study of the uniformities of nature has brought into the world is a different thing. It is an ethical by-product of the study of God's book of nature. It approaches every problem and begins every investigation with an attitude of mind which the habit of scientific research has done more than anything else to produce. You find it profoundly present in the life of Charles Darwin and many another scientific investigator. And it finds its place in the heart of the Christian religion as that religion functions in our time. In a very real sense it has become a more widely diffused attitude in our own days. And in that sense we may call it a gift of contemporary life to Christianity.

Then there is a new insistence on efficiency. Sainthood and efficiency have not been exactly equivalent terms, though there have been very efficient saints. But the world in which we live is applying new standards

of effective activity everywhere. It is applying them to manufacturing. It is applying them to business. It is applying them to the church. A brilliant writer some time ago lifted the question as to whether there was not danger that the prophet would be lost in the efficiency engineer. In the midst of a wonderfully organized piece of Christian activity a young minister asked a friend, "What is to become of the preacher?" No doubt the question was legitimate. And no doubt we must preserve the prophet at all costs. But it is also true, that the standards of efficiency have come to be a permanent part of our life. And the organization of Christian activity after the most approved methods for effective work is inevitable. This note of efficiency with its peculiar insistent emphasis is a contribution of contemporary life to Christianity.

Then there is a sort of bright-eyed human interest which is capturing the imagination of no end of people. Probably we live in an age more quickly responsive to all human interests than any which has come before. All sorts of relations are being made more human. There is no doubt in the world that

religion is being made more human. It may be claimed that this new humanity is itself the creation of Christianity. No doubt Christianity comes as its eager ally. But we all know that there have been wonderful Christians who quite lacked this human quality. And rich as was the Renaissance in varied interests, the human note of which we are speaking is something different from humanism. Democracy has come to include children, and all types of people, and all ranges of experience. And the attempt to interpret Christianity in the terms of this spirit is a direct outcome of the movements of contemporary life. All this does not change the faith once delivered to the saints. It does reveal that faith in the light of many new and beautiful relationships.

CHAPTER XXV

THE CHRISTIAN SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EMOTIONS

A NOVELIST with a turn for psychology once wrote a story about two amiable and on the whole estimable people, who after their marriage discovered that the zest of their friendship was somehow waning. They did not have the old beautiful glow at the thought of being together. There were times when they bored each other. There were even times when they bored each other dreadfully. At last they began to get on each other's nerves. And then each made the curious discovery that some other person could arouse all the emotion of gay and promising wonder in the midst of life which had quite died out of their home life. They talked the matter over. They decided to release each other. Each was to go on the quest of that beautiful and satisfying emotional self-expression which seemed to lie in another relationship. They carried out

their decision. Two years passed. They chanced to meet at a famous watering place. A cynical and jaded man sat down beside a weary and disillusioned woman. They talked over the whole matter. At last the man said with a flash of sad insight: "Do you know I am inclined to think that the only emotion which can be depended upon must be the shadow of a great steadfastness. That sort of emotion may play odd tricks with you. It may seem to go away. But if you are loyal, it will come back. I have been studying a good many men and women and our talk to-day brings all I have been seeing to a sharp point of understanding. The great and permanent emotions always follow in the trail of the persistent loyalties." The woman sat very still for a moment. Then she said, with a sort of wistful pain in her voice, "I believe you are right."

The emotions are indeed curious things. But when we have learned that the emotional life is always a by-product of the volitional life, we have made the great discovery. It is not at all an immediate process. But if you hold to a principle and put it into

action, the day will come when the whole emotional life responds to the quality of your character. On the other hand, the man who seeks the emotions directly will always find that they flee from him. The man who tries to cultivate his emotional life directly will always fail. There is an old story of a woman who took a small child to a circus. The child became very cross and restless. The woman began to box the ears of the child, saying as she did so: "I have brought you here to have a good time. Now enjoy yourself! I tell you, enjoy yourself." As a matter of fact, we sometimes try to coerce ourselves in rather the way in which this woman tried to deal with her child. We say: "Go to now! This is a thing I ought to enjoy. I will enjoy it!" But we never do. The only way to cultivate even a noble emotion is to accept and act on the principle with which that emotion is connected. Any other way leads to emotional dust and ashes at last. This way leads to a permanent and noble richness of the emotional life.

All this has a notable relation to the inner experiences of the Christian. If his life has been opened to all the wonder of the Mas-

ter's presence, there has been an accompanying experience of deep and rich emotion. But the day comes when the emotion quite dies away. A man is able to think about the Master of his life with no flash of joy at all. He begins to wonder if he has lost that relation to the living Christ which was transforming all his life. He tries to feel as he did. The more he tries the less he succeeds. And often he enters upon a period of difficulty and confusion.

Of course the whole experience is normal enough if the man does not get his hands caught in the revolving wheels. No man can keep at white heat all the while. The wise religious teacher prepares the novitiate for the time when all the rich and exquisite emotions seem to fade away. There is only one thing to do. That is to keep on doing the will of Christ. That is to say in the hour of nervous temptation: "Man shall not live by emotions alone, but by faithfully fulfilling the behests of his Master." The first thing which happens is that the man comes to have a curious sense of enfranchisement from the tyranny of his emotions. He ceases to test his state of grace by his state

of feeling. The second thing which happens is that sooner or later the emotions come back more rich and lofty because of the very faithfulness which has persisted in Christian loyalty in the unkindled hour. The mystical wonder fills the soul, and it has the noble wholesomeness which it can achieve only in a life whose fundamental relation to God is a commitment of the will. The emotions always follow in the train of those volitions which express the real character.

There is no relation of life which cannot be greatly enriched by the knowledge that the will is fundamental and the emotions in the long run follow the bent of the character. What you are at last comes forth in what you feel.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE HOLY SPIRIT

"We learn a great many words when we are young. And as we grow older one of two things happens. Either our words shrink to fit our experiences, or else our experiences expand to fit our words." So spoke a wise teacher, and one of the students in the class that day never forgot his words.

There are a good many tremendously significant phrases which fall lightly from our lips when we are young. And sometimes they harden into conventional pass words so that we never really learn their actual meaning. Religion has many such words and many such phrases. It makes one think of the stinging irony in one of Alfred Noyes's poems:

"You chatter in church like jackdaws,
Words that would wake the dead,
Were there one breath of life in you,
One drop of blood, he said."

And among the words either alive with

golden meaning or heavy with dull convention none has been bent to stranger vicissitudes than the name "the Holy Spirit." One of Maarten Maarten's short stories has a reference to a corpse which brings a sudden chill to the reader: "Behind the threadbare curtains of the alcove she lay—it." The impersonal pronoun has all the cold clammy quality of death in it. Yet this is very often the pronoun which men choose when they want to speak of the work of the Holy Spirit —"Its work," they say. On the other hand it is clear that despite careless use as a coin whose value is only vaguely understood the phrase, "the Holy Spirit," stands for something deep and precious in the lives of some of the rarest spirits in all the world. To them the world is a homelike place because God is all the while at work in it. There is an invisible, intangible presence everywhere pressing its beautiful and wonderful way among men. And that invisible presence, that friendly ally of the inner life as it looks upward toward ideals and strives to climb the heights is the Holy Spirit, is the immanent God always and everywhere active in the world which he has made.

To a good many people religion seems a strange thing because they think of it as something into which you must work your way, something different from all your life and foreign to all your previous experience. The truth is, of course, that the one really familiar voice in a man's life is the voice of the friendly immanent God speaking within. There is a witness of the spirit which every man knows in the terms of every religion the world round. That voice which rings like a challenge calling you to do some good and beautiful thing, that voice which calls you to high dreams, and summons you to noble actions, that voice as widely diffused as mankind upon the planet and as insistent as hunger in the soul of man, that voice tells us how truly religion is the best known thing of all. For, in a sense, the hearing and the heeding of that voice is the very beginning of the life of religion. If there were no such inner contact with the wistful voice of the God who would allure us to high things, there could be no such thing as authentic religion among men.

And it is important to see that there is not merely a spirit. There is also a Holy Spirit.

There are wonderful moods of the inner life when we seem one with all the vastly diffused vitality in the world, and one with all the serenities which pass like fleecy clouds through our fancy, and there is no particular relation to character in the experience. But the deepest spirit which speaks to us does not utter a voice of unethical mysticism. It is a summons to some duty. It is a call to some high resolve. It is a challenge to action. It is the voice of the God of character calling for character in his children. Prophet and priest can speak to us with compulsion because we have already heard this inner voice. The God without becomes authentic because we have heard the voice of God within.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MEN'S MORAL EXPERIENCE

"If you have heard the voice of conscience, you have heard the voice of God." A minister who had the gift for quick turns of expression was speaking. He went on: "The fact is that God is speaking to us in every deep and intimate experience of personal struggle. He is the infinitely near and not the infinitely far. Every time we feel the push of moral demand in our lives God is there at work. Every time we feel the stir of ethical aspiration, or the lash of moral condemnation God is at work in our lives. He holds a court there every day where the moral issues come up for decision. It is all so intimate and personal that we feel as if it is the action simply of our own mind and of our own will. But working in and through the processes of our own personal life, God is presently and potently active all the while."

That emerging of a moral ideal, that going forth in the name of its high behests, that terrible and testing struggle with the demand of the moral elements in our nature, is not, as a matter of fact, something which we meet apart from God. It is something which we meet under the guidance of that immanent and potent Spirit who is God at work in our lives. Very often we have the feeling that God is distant and remote and inaccessible. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We may not really know our most intimate friends. But with God we have all had a contact more close and personal and potent than that which belongs to any human relationship. To live at all as a being in whom a moral ideal emerges is to live in actual relationship with that God whose own voice speaks the word of moral command in every human life.

The amazing thing about all this when we think of it from the standpoint of the patient self-effacing work of the Spirit of God in connection with it, is just the fashion in which the Moral voice adjusts itself to the very quality of each individual life. George MacDonald used to say, "God gives every

man fair play." It is true in a deeper and more wonderful sense than even that tender, noble-spirited writer realized. The work of the Holy Spirit in the moral processes of men's lives always meets them in the terms of their own experience, and mediates its behests in the very thoughts and aspirations which are a normal part of their lives in the light of the actual situation in which they find themselves. There is nothing forced about it. There is nothing artificial about it. It is all so deeply a part of the very structural quality of a man's own nature that he feels as if the voice of God is simply the voice of his own inner life. God meets every man on the level of his own thinking, and feeling, and willing in this inner demand which the Holy Spirit makes in the developing and growing life.

It is just this, of course, which made it possible for Jesus to speak so sternly about the sin against the Holy Ghost. A man might fail to accept Jesus himself as Lord and Master of his life because he had never heard of him, or because he had never had a real opportunity to understand him or his summons. But if a man repudiates that

inner voice which speaks in the terms of his own experience and in the language of his own struggle, he has turned from the very central reality in his own soul. To turn from that voice in final refusal is to slay the very spirit of goodness in a man's own life. An electric lamp contains a thin fiber which glows with the electric flame. When that fiber has burned out there can be no light. There is a subtle fiber in every life capable of responding to reality. When a man treats that in such fashion that it burns out there can be no moral light in the soul. It is not that such a man goes to hell. It is a much more fundamental thing. He becomes hell. Wherever he is there is the inferno. Like the Ancient Mariner, he has slain the albatross of his own ideal. Only he is without regret, for he has slain the capacity for regret as well. The capacity so to repudiate the Moral Voice, so to slay goodness in the soul, represents the supreme imperial expression of evil in human life. The outreach of God after men until the last spark of goodness has died in them is represented in that wonderful prophetic word, "A dimly burning wick will he not quench."

When a man responds to the moral voice it is God himself working within who gives him a task which is too great for him. It is God who presses him into a quest which can come to satisfaction only when his dependence on his own will is changed into dependence upon the will of God. That very process which creates in men the undying hunger for religion is the result of the work of the indwelling Spirit of God in the responsive spirit of man. In this sense the Holy Spirit is a schoolmaster leading men everywhere through the winding ways of ethical battle into the high tablelands of peace.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND RELIGION

"THE thing which I want to know about religion is this," said an intensely earnest man: "Is it my quest after God, or is it God's quest after me? Is it humanity feeling its way toward the divine, or is it the divine making itself known to the human?"

"Those questions are very impressive, and they are very vital," replied the friend with whom he was talking. "But I should prefer to express my feeling about religion from a rather different point of approach. I should want to say that religion is God at work *in* men to draw them into that quality of experience where they share their life with him."

All that sense of an overlordship upon which men can depend, which has expressed itself in so many ways in the inner life of men, is essentially a part of religion, and it is the creation of the Spirit of God at work

in the places of human life where the deepest and surest intuitions are born. The friendly God is always working in every human life making the compulsion of the invisible more real just as rapidly as there is an actual human response to his work.

The poetry of the world is simply saturated with the consciousness of something more subtly interfused which is the presence of the great Spirit of Life always active and pressing into the life of responsive spirits. And this sweeping, almost cosmic consciousness of God in nature and God in the invisible places of the soul is the movement toward articulation of that work which God's spirit is perpetually doing in the heart of man. God is in the search after God. This is one of the profoundest truths about life, and it changes the world when once we come to apprehend its meaning. If God is in the desire to know God, then he cannot be an entirely unknown God after all. The preacher of vital religion can always say, "Whom ye have unconsciously communed with, Him declare I unto you." This does not mean that there is something complete and satisfying about the preliminary con-

tact with God in the central places of a man's own life. It does mean that there is something essentially real about it. A foundation is not a house. But a foundation does make a firm and stable and substantial house possible. And it cannot be said too emphatically that God is so deeply present in the desire for religion that this very presence is full of promise for the satisfaction of that desire.

Fundamentally, it is not hard to see that the whole matter of the possibility of religion as an authentic personal experience rests upon the actuality of God's contact with the inner life of man. The Holy Spirit is God at work in human life. We do not mean that this exhausts the work of the Divine Spirit. We do mean that whatever else he does, at least he does this. He makes men conscious of that which is more than man, and he is the tutor of the soul developing that consciousness into richer and fuller meaning.

Religion, then, is not a human invention. It is a divine revelation. But there must be a center of meeting established in the human heart before any literary expression of the

will of God can be communicated to man. Man is made for religion and it is not something foreign to his nature. And the fact which gives validity to this assumption is just the perpetual working of God's Spirit in all human hearts. Some of the detailed matters of significance in this ceaseless activity we shall discuss later. Now, we must see that every man's religion begins with this voice within which speaks in the name of the invisible Master of Life. In this sense only a man who turns from God is godless. No man is godless in the sense that God has not spoken in his own soul.

To trust this inner intuition, to believe in it, and to build upon it is the very essence of religion. It may take many forms. It may come forth in all sorts of ways. But the creator of the intuition is the Spirit of God himself, and that same Spirit it is who teaches men to trust it, and to make it the central matter in their lives.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE UNCHRISTIAN PEOPLES

As early as the second century that Christian apologist Justin Martyr realized that God is present in lives outside the range of historic Christianity. He was sure that certain of the Greek philosophers belonged to the kingdom of God. The problem of the people who never have heard of Christ, or who having heard his name pronounced never have felt the compulsion of his personality, is one of those challenging and difficult problems which have given no end of distress to sensitive Christian minds.

When we begin to study ethnic religions we find much that is crude, much that is base, and much that is terrible in them. But we also find the most wonderful threads of gold. We also find the most astonishing flashes of moral and spiritual insight. And sometimes we find views of life characterized by extraordinary elevation and nobility. No one

of the ethnic religions is false in the sense that it contains no truth at all. Now, what is the source of the truth which glows with bright shining beauty in many an ethnic cult? There is only one possible answer, and that is that the light which lights every man coming into the world has been shining here. God's Spirit has been at work in every ethnic religion, doing what he can by means of it to bring men to the place where they have more adequate ideas of life and of God, and to propel them toward more inwardly noble and more outwardly righteous life. There is a point of contact somewhere in every religion with the truth which burst forth in full radiance in the religion of Jesus Christ. Paul seized upon the truth with sure intuition when he used the words: God "is not far from each one of us." It is true indeed that in him we live and move and have our being. It is true that the offspring of God keeps some real contact with God even where life is most cruelly and strangely confused.

One must admit that there is much in the ethnic religions which can claim no inspiration from a God with a character. The

apotheosis of vice is something against which God's indwelling spirit is fighting all the while. The gods of the Greeks had committed all the wrongs which were characteristic of Greek life. There is always a temptation to make religion a mirror of contemporary life instead of a summons to a higher life. But in spite of all this the God who works within all human hearts manages to get some real hearing. He protests against the unworthy. He flashes in upon men's minds the worthy. And he prepares men for the day when the morally clean religion shall break in upon their astonished gaze.

The sense that the secret of life is to be found in an experience of trustful dependence upon the God who made the world and is the great power in the world, is the heart of religion. It gets itself expressed in all sorts of ways in the ethnic religions. Sometimes the method of expression is crass and cruel. Sometimes it rises to real heights of moral beauty and spiritual quality. And through it all the indwelling God is pressing his way into the deepest experience of men.

All of this comes to its sharpest and most

critical meaning at that moment of strategy when, in the terms of whatever religion a man receives and accepts, the Spirit of God presses him to the place where he must make a great decision. He must take sides in the contest of life. He must decide for or against the best he knows.

The Pope in Robert Browning's masterpiece, "The Ring and the Book," cried out

> "Life is a probation,
> And its business just the terrible choice."

It is a choice which no man can escape. And the reason no man can escape it is just that the Spirit of God is powerfully present in every human life in all the world, and sooner or later he makes it inevitable that the moment of destiny must be faced. It is a perfectly fair test, for the individual does not meet some external standard. He decides what he will do with the best he himself knows.

Jesus related all this to one very simple and human matter in his great utterance regarding the judgment of the nations. Hosts of surprised people would be welcomed to his perfect felicity because they had minis-

tered to his need. They had fed him when he was hungry. They had given him drink in his hour of thirst. They had given him clothing when he was in an extremity of want. But these people had never even heard of him. They were completely confused. They did not have any memory of ministering to him. His solution of their problem was in some brief words. Whenever they had ministered to human need they had ministered to him. That simple impulse of the human heart to relieve suffering and to make the world a kindlier place is to be found everywhere. The man who enthrones that unselfish, kindly impulse is relating himself unconsciously to that gospel of which he has never heard.

And, on the other hand, the man who repudiates the law of kindness and refuses to give forth the life of helpfulness, the call for which sounds so deeply in his own soul, is sinning against the Christ of whom he has never heard. But whatever form the battle takes a man must decide for or against the best he knows. And after the way of struggle has stretched on its summoning miles, there comes into his heart a dim conscious-

ness that his loyalty is not lost, that somewhere there is a great Eye which sees it, and somewhere there is a great Heart which understands it. And so the Indwelling Spirit whispers in his heart a dim prophetic anticipation of that peace which passes understanding in the Christian soul.

CHAPTER XXX

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRISTIANITY

"CHRISTIANITY gives the Holy Spirit an opportunity to do a complete work among men." The quiet man who was speaking had a way of getting a hearing when he spoke. He was a brooding mystic, with a clear and steady intellectual life and a conscience aflame with moral passion. He was talking this particular night to the little group of friends who knew him best and prized his leadership most. "God's Spirit is always working," he went on, "but most of the time he works under a very real handicap. He is adjusting himself to the multitudinous misconceptions which hang in clutters about the ethnic faiths. Through all of this confusion, and in spite of it, and even in triumphant fashion by means of it, he does a work of far-reaching strategy in the world. But when he has access to a life fed on the traditions of Christianity, when he is work-

ing in a spirit built into consciousness by means of the great conceptions and the massive facts of the Old Testament and the New, then he has a real opportunity to release his full energies and do a thorough piece of work in human life. He can bring a man to decision under the terms of any religion. He can bring a man to completion only under the terms of Christianity."

To call the Bible the weapon of the Holy Ghost is to speak in no idle terms. Many a religion offers him a poor and dull sword. But the sharp and cutting edge of the truth which speaks from the Bible makes it a weapon ready for his hand. The Old Testament, as Professor Davidson used to say, at least succeeds in pronouncing one word, and that word is righteousness. The voices of the prophets, the poignant message of the Psalms, all the summoning notes which rise from the Old Testament are the very materials out of which the Holy Spirit forges his sword. The high and tender beauty of the life of Jesus, the penetration of his words, the lonely suffering power of his death, the singing joy of his resurrection—all these when they become part of the vital

knowledge of a man, give God's Spirit an opportunity to do for him what he could never do before. And when a man puts his own struggling life beside the life of Paul, and learns Paul's secret, all the while the Holy Spirit is mediating that experience with a sort of intimate inner friendliness. Every truth, every principle, every fact, and every experience of Christianity is written into the human heart with a certain moral and spiritual finality by the mighty Spirit of God.

Here we come upon a wonderfully self-effacing quality which belongs to the work of the divine Spirit. All the while he delights to lose himself in the work he is doing. Out in the terms of the ethnic religions he seems to lose himself in the personal life of the man in whom he is working. When he has all the Christian materials ready for use in a human life, he hides behind the truths he is impressing, and the Saviour whose work he is applying. "He shall testify of me," said Jesus. And it is indeed true that all the while the great Spirit is pointing to Jesus, and crying, "Crown him, crown him, crown him Lord of all." The curious fact

that we know the Holy Spirit so intimately and yet seem not to know him at all loses its paradoxical aspect when once we have understood the eagerly self-forgetful quality of his work.

There are many wonderful ways upon which the advancing Christian soul must travel. And all the while the Holy Spirit is an invisible and friendly guide. He puts new potency into worship. He gives the sacraments a certain power of actual seizure. He sets nature singing with the love of God. He lifts from Christian history the golden threads of its deepest moral and spiritual meaning. He puts power into Christian speech. He puts fire into Christian writing. He interprets a thousand varied experiences in the aspect of their meaning for Christian character. He gives a certain bright authenticity to the thought of trusting Christ and puts propulsion into the decision to risk past and present and future in one great and continued act of faith in the Son of God who has died for us. He floods the soul with the rapturous sense of acceptance. He deepens the loyalty and rims it with the gold of spon-

taneous devotion, until more and more loyalty is lost in love. He is the perpetual Companion of the Christian in all the vast adventures of the life of faith. All the while he interprets this inner life in the terms of outer faithfulness. Trust and work go hand in hand. The gospel of inner communion becomes the gospel of right living. The two form the complete music of the Christian life. And in the hour of hesitation, and the hour of folly, and the hour of sin, he is a wise and tender Physician ready with skill to restore, ready with the promise of health and strength.

All this comes forth when there is the full opportunity for a characteristic work in the life of a man who is ready to be what may be called a practical mystic. He is a man who has an inner life all transformed by the hidden communion, and an outer activity all mastered by the principles of Jesus Christ. So with ceaseless persistence the immanent God works in the lives of Christian men and women as they go through the advancing experiences of the days and the years.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SOCIAL ORGANISM

"I DO not believe in society. I only believe in myself." A flashing-eyed young student was speaking, and he put into his voice a full measure of challenge.

An older man who was standing near, smiled a little whimsically. "And yet society is necessary if you are going to have any self-expression with a particle of interest about it," he said. "And, more than that, if there were no society, you could never have an audience."

The dream of brotherhood is quite the deepest and noblest dream of human relationships. And the sense that society is an organism, and that we must learn to live as a part of that organism, is one of the surest and truest of our intuitions. There are a good many ways in which it is possible to approach this haunting summoning sense of human solidarity. Just now we want to

view it from the standpoint of the work of God's Spirit making the dream of brotherhood commanding in the lives of men.

It is not to be denied that there is a great deal of social passion in the world which in no way connects itself with formal religion. It looks with rapturous eyes into a glad future when men shall live like brothers, and when every human life shall give the most it is capable of giving, and receive the most of which it is capable in this world. Sometimes as one listens to the passionate power of the speech of some contemporary socialists who are completely swept by the poetic splendor of their great dream, it seems that the passion for evangelism which has waned in so many churches has come to life again quite without contact with religion, and very often in determined hostility to religion, in these prophets of a new social synthesis.

Breaking its way through the conventional thinking and the conventional living of all sorts of human groups the social passion makes its way. Sometimes it edges the thinking of a man of hard and rigid and mechanical views of life with a fringe of gold. Sometimes it quickens the conscience and

gives fire to the words of an evangelical preacher, so that you never can hear him without coming near to the hunger and the pain and the need of the great masses of men. Sometimes it seizes the mind and captures the imagination of a powerful business man so that he becomes a captain in the service of humanity as well as a captain of industry.

What is the source of this vast and sweeping movement in contemporary life? Where will we find the springs from which these great rivers of compassion flow? What inspiration is putting the heart of wistful and eager brotherhood into so many men and women?

The answer to these questions must lead us back to that work of the immanent God in the world which is the glory and the hope of every age. In each generation he finds a sensitive surface in the human conscience upon which to write, and in our time the word he is writing has to do with the hope of a society built about the vital principle of brotherhood. The Spirit of God himself is the source of the winged energy which carries the social passion forward in our day.

We must learn and we must come to feel with deep and adequate understanding that God's Spirit is not confined to the typical Christian experiences and the typical Christian relationships. These are the high summits toward which he would lead mankind. But all the while he relates himself to every vital experience which has a possibility of wholesome outcome. Every potential thing in art, every real movement in letters, every tide of deep and true human aspiration opens fields for his working, and he gives himself freely and heartily to them all. The center of luminous vitality in any human movement, the glowing point of hope for the race, is just the point where the living Spirit of God fires it with a new energy and enriches it with a more potent inspiration.

In the passion for an adequate social organism in the world we have not merely a beautiful human dream, we have a creation of the immanent God at work in the hearts of men. And wherever that fire burns, God himself is not far away.

To be sure, all of this passion may be expressed in ways which at last sin against the very brotherhood for which it longs. The

social passion like every great force breaking out of the heart of man may be a destructive as well as a constructive thing. It must be guided. It must be interpreted. And the Christian who knows the teachings and the spirit of Jesus knows that here will be found the guidance which will make the whole movement most nobly productive in the life of the world. Toward this God's Spirit is working, and in the meantime he is touching with flame every mind and every heart which is ready to believe in the fellowship of men in a real social organism.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE LIFE OF GOD AND THE SOCIAL BROTHERHOOD

"Is that a good photograph of God?" asks little David in Margaret Deland's story, The Awakening of Helena Ritchie. The small boy has been looking at a picture of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. He has been much interested in the face which looks out of the cloud above the two figures in the river. He has inquired about this face, and the good old minister, Dr. Lavendar, has replied that this represents God. Then David asks his startling question. It is not too difficult a question for Dr. Lavendar, however. He looks at the small boy with understanding eyes. Then he says, "If it looks like a kind father, I think it is a good photograph of God."

If we are to believe that men are brothers we must believe that God is our Father. There is no real brotherhood of men without the Fatherhood of God. All the fair and

alluring dreams of more ideal days and more ideal men must be based firmly in the constitution of things if we are really to believe in them. There must be some spot in the universe where the ideal lives enthroned if we are actually to believe in it. Just the fragile projections of our own eager thought never can make a place for themselves in the life of the world. But if the fairest thing we dream in an hour of inspired fancy is only a hint of the glorious reality which exists in the life of God, then we can believe in it and work for it, and live in the name of it, and die in loyalty to it, knowing that though temporarily defeated, one day it must conquer. The thing which lives in the life of God must live triumphant in the life of men at last.

And so it comes about that the charter for the hope of human brotherhood is in one luminous sentence: "God is love." Let us be sure of that, and all the decadent doubts flee away. Let us be sure of that, and all the hard and cruel cynicisms perish. Let us believe without faltering that this is true, and selfishness feels a death blow. All the simple and beautiful and noble idealisms of

the world rise in stalwart power if that is true. We have called men visionaries who believed in love; but if God is love, these visionaries are the only really practical people in all the world. They alone have invested in the bank whose securities are good forever.

There are forces enough in the world which are the foes of brotherhood. They are strongely intrenched in human life. Sometimes they seem to be a sort of brotherhood organized to defeat the purposes of brotherhood in the world. Every reform has battled against them. Every good has fought its way into the life of men in spite of them. They are so vividly and vigorously strong that we find it hard to realize that all this strength is the merest make-believe. The universe is built along other lines. The basal structure of things is foreign to all this grossly complacent selfishness. There is a loving Heart at the center of the center of the universe, and that heart controls all the vast machinery of this cosmic life. If you are on the side of love, you are on the side of the future. If you are on the side of love, you are on the side of God.

To be sure, it is an ethical love which reigns in the life of God. But that simply means that brotherhood has a sure and firm foundation. An unethical love never could be the basis of brotherhood. It could be the basis of cruel exploitation. It could be the basis of hard and remorseless sensuality. Only an ethical love has the seed of permanence in it. And that perfect union of love and righteousness which is the character of God is the one dependable assurance of the triumph of the principles of brotherhood in the life of men.

If you want to be an effective social reformer, then the first thing about which you want to be perfectly sure is the nature of God. If you want to believe in victorious brotherhood, you must first believe in all powerful fatherhood. The firm foundation for the hope of social reconstruction is in the very life of God. Because God is love, that high and ethical love which makes men into brothers must be victorious at last in all the relationships of men.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE TRINITY AND THE HUMAN SOCIAL ORGANISM

A VERY effective social worker who had put new spirit into the settlement where he labored, was sitting at dinner after a day of hard and wearisome effort. An old college friend was with him, and falling into the ways of the old days in school together, the two fell to talking of all sorts of things. At last they came round to the significance of theology for contemporary life.

The social worker smiled a little. "I do not at all go as far as some of my colleagues," he said. "They say that Christianity is a program and not a philosophy, and that every time it becomes self-conscious and philosophical it becomes ineffective. I have no defense for dead theologies. But I can see clearly that a program must have a philosophy behind it. And I can see that Christianity must bring satisfaction to the mind as well as energizing to the will. In fact, as

I go on with my work, more and more I find unsuspected social meaning in Christian doctrines of which I used to think very little. But there is one doctrine which means absolutely nothing to me. That is the doctrine of the Trinity. It seems a mass of intellectual incoherency, and I cannot see that it has any relation to practical life."

The friend of the social worker smiled at the outburst, and then he spoke: "Curiously enough, the doctrine of the Trinity is the one doctrine about which I should have supposed you would be most keen. How are you going to believe profoundly in a social life in man if you do not believe in a social life in God? If the social impulse only comes from the will of God and not from the nature of God, how can you possibly give it a structural place in the life of the world?"

It is one of the really dramatic things about contemporary thought that the whole social passion and the whole commanding belief in a human social organism come with fresh and vivid light upon the Christian view of God as an eternal social life in which the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit dwell together in mutual unselfishness, each

necessary for the very life of the other, ethics and metaphysics meeting in the organic life of the Godhead. To be sure, the whole power of such a conception depends upon what it does for us in explaining the phenomena of experience. We must examine it as we would a scientific hypothesis and judge it from the standpoint of the facts which it enables us to classify and the range of experience which it enables us to explain.

It is clear at once that if there is an eternal unselfish social life in God, an absolutely new meaning is given to the words, "God is love." The social relationship is not something which a lonely God conceived for a world which he was about to create. It is something which is the expression of his own nature and of his own deepest life. You have saved the social ideal from all the gossamer beauty and actual futility of a mere dream when once you have seen that it is based in the very structural life of the Deity. Our ideal for society is, then, to have men become in time what God is in eternity.

And at the very moment when we secure this result we come upon another of the most strategic meaning. If God is an eternal

unselfishness, then there is real continuity in the ethical life of the universe. On the other hand, if God is a lonely figure living without social life, without fundamental opportunity for unselfishness in the isolated splendors of his own infinite life, we come upon the gravest moral problems. Such a God must live in an eternal self-love. And when he creates men and asks them to be unselfish he is making the fundamental requirement of men that they should attain virtue by being as unlike God as possible. What is good in him is terribly bad in them. What is tragically evil in them is perfectly good in him. If, however, the very life of God is the eternal unselfish experience of love between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, then it is a God who is an eternal unselfishness who asks us to forget ourselves in the thought of others. There is no deadly dualism introduced into the ethical and spiritual life of God and man.

The social worker meets many tragic disappointments. The days have a weight of knowledge of human vice and sordidness which sometimes becomes almost too heavy to bear. But if the friend of man can look

up from human selfishness and realize that unselfishness reigns supreme in the life of God, a new light comes into his sky. He believes in the human social synthesis with a new faith. He commits himself to human brotherhood with a new assurance. He goes forward through many dull and disillusioning days with a new light in his eyes and a new joy in his heart. His social hope has a solid place in the constitution of things. It is as firm and dependable as the very nature of Almighty God.

CHAPTER XXXIV

PROBING MORE DEEPLY INTO THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL PROCESS

"If a man journeys far enough into his own soul, he will find all the secrets of the universe," declared a deep-eyed mystic. Such words have to be taken with a certain amount of caution, but they do serve to remind us that the inner life of man has the most amazing and far-reaching connections. And it is surely true that the more deeply we know our own souls the more we will know about humanity. And the more we fathom the hungers which are a part of the necessary experience of our own lives the more we will know about what God is actually doing in the world.

That process of going forth in the name of a great ethical ideal and fighting a failing fight until God himself reenforces our endeavor has occupied our attention as the central matter in human experience.

"All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All of which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come."

The discovery that we are incomplete until we find the glorious supplement to our own strength in the strength of the mighty Master of life is indeed the greatest discovery we can make. But this moral quest and this spiritual freedom have deeper relationships than we have yet seen. The process of ethical battle and the serenity of inner peace deserve a closer study.

The heart of the problem was put with words which had a sharp edge to them by a man who cried out in the midst of a profound moral struggle. "I want to be forgiven, but I am not at all sure that I can allow God to forgive me."

There are far-reaching relationships to the moral life of mankind. And a man's peace must always come in such a way as to further the moral validity of the whole of

life. The man who finds it possible to take forgiveness for granted is a man who has never sounded the real depths of ethical experience. It is not a question of what an arbitrary God is willing to do. It is a question in a genuine sense of what a human conscience actually awake can accept from God. To be sure, God himself is speaking in this human sense of ethical fitness. He is rousing in man a consciousness of a problem which he feels more deeply than man can ever feel it.

If man ever comes into fellowship with God, it must be in such a fashion that no ethical interest of life suffers through God's contact with a life torn and soiled by sin. And it cannot be said too emphatically that this is a requirement which arises from man's nature, and is not an arbitrary insistence on the part of a remote and austere Deity. The Calvinist who was willing, or said he was willing, to be damned for the glory of God, was just saying in a heightened and startling fashion that the ethical and spiritual validity of the universe was a more important matter than his own personal destiny.

As one presses more closely into the matter it is clear that everything hinges at last on a consciousness that man's deepest problem is not weakness but sin. It is not innocent incapacity. It is deliberate alliance with the evil and the selfish. And the presence of malignant evil in human life is the terribly tragic matter. A man's fight is with a divided will. There are really two of him. There is a Dr. Jekyll; there is a Mr. Hyde, and the two are in deadly conflict. The man needs help, and yet a part of the time he does not want help. It is clear that a part of him must be slain. It is clear that a part of him must be given high ethical triumph. He must learn to hate what one part of his nature has loved, and he must learn to love what one part of his nature has hated. And this process of reconstruction must be carried on by a method which is without ethical flaw. You cannot surrender ethics for the sake of an ethical victory. And this process must be one in which an infinitely perfect God in all the unsoiled purity of his life can intimately share. Perfect purity must have such a contact with dark and devastating evil that the high and adventurous virility of

the pure life of God shall be expressed in all its masterful and tender strength at the very moment when it is most deeply true to its own stainless integrity. God in action must meet and triumph over all the dark and disintegrating forces in the life of man. He must do this for the individual. He must do this for society.

All this brings us within sight of the supreme and central matter in historic Christianity. The remaining studies of this series will have to do with Calvary and its meaning for the world.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE CROSS AS AN INFLUENCE

In a curious and fantastic novel entitled The Romance of Two Worlds, written many years ago, Miss Marie Corelli placed one chapter called "A Miniature Creation." Its aim was in imagination to put a human being in God's place, and to show how a Deity who would take upon himself the limitations of the creatures whom he had made and live their life and at last die for them, would capture their minds, and seize upon their imagination, and win their hearts in a way which would be absolutely impossible without this great sacrifice. The idea has been expressed in manifold ways in theology and poetry and in preaching. It speaks out of the New Testament in such potent words as: "The love of Christ constraineth us." It lived in the mind of Abelard in the twelfth century. It came to masterful and passionate expression in the writings of Horace Bushnell in the nineteenth century. And

it is really fair to say that, whatever a man's view of the ministry of the cross, it has implicitly or explicitly included this idea of the winning power of the sacrifice of the Great Sufferer.

Friendship is made over again when we learn that our friend is willing to suffer for us. Love is transfigured when it bends under a burden of heavy pain. Many a boy in the great war found an experience which still burns in his heart like fire, when he learned what painful risks his most intimate comrade was willing to take for his sake. There were not many words, but a new light came into the eye, and a new brightness came into life, because a man's devotion to a man had shone out so brightly for one golden moment.

It hardly can be denied that we must meet God in what he does rather than in what he is. Or, to put it more adequately, what he is must express itself in what he does if we are ever to have any real contact with him. All the wonderful meanings of his life must be translated into action if we are to understand him and if we are to love him. We cannot have as our great Divine Friend one

who is hidden away in the immovable splendors of his own interior perfection, and who never comes forth in the radiance of perfect deeds to speak to men. Just here lies the necessity for the incarnation. A God who is an infinite spectator can be our distant Master; he can never be our heavenly Father. A God who keeps out of the strain and stress and woeful struggle of human life can never speak to us with compelling authenticity.

A young man who entered the great war early was astonished at the close of a certain engagement to find his father in a Red Cross uniform moving about among the wounded. As he clasped his father's hand and looked into his father's eyes, in one moment he got acquainted with that father all over again. All sorts of things which he believed about his father now confronted him in brave action. The father he met on the battlefield was a father he had never fully known before.

The God you meet on the battlefield is the God for whom your heart has been yearning in a sort of inarticulate pain. And the very meaning of the incarnation is this,

that in Jesus Christ God meets you on the very battlefield of life. He is burdened. He is weary. He is wounded. He is heart-broken. And he is killed at last. There is nothing of human pain which he evades. There is nothing of human suffering which he avoids. And as with awed and sobered eyes you look upon the cross, you know that at last you have seen the heart of God.

"I cannot do that thing," said a vigorous lad with a serious face. "My father did that thing, and it broke my mother's heart." There are many things which are seen in a new way by eyes which have seen the cross. There are many things which a man cannot do when he knows that the cruel cost of Calvary came to Jesus because men had gone on doing such things in the world. The strange and noble surgery of the cross removes some things forever from a man's life.

And in the most amazing fashion the cross wins the man who has really seen it to the very thought and feeling and purpose about life which characterized Jesus. He is all the while growing into the mind of Christ. He sees men through the eyes of the crucified.

He sees sin as it appeared to Jesus upon the cross. He sees God as the cross made God's pure high love visible. He sees the future in the light of the possibilities which must inhere in human life to give the tragic sacrifice a real justification. He is won and mastered and transformed by the God who broke his way into the passionate evil of the world and died for men.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE CROSS AND THE ETHICAL SANCTIONS

We are all familiar with the story of the saying of the great philosopher Immanuel Kant when he was an old man. Many things were lost out of his life. Many tasks had become too much for his mind. But he declared that two things were left. One was the beauty of the night sky, the other was the splendor of the moral law. It is one of the amazing things about this faltering, failing, defiant life of ours that it is capable of conceiving of a life which attains all that of which it fails. The dream of a perfect moral order gleams with golden and alluring beauty before human eyes. We cannot realize it and we cannot relinquish it. And when it comes to any fundamental dealing with the problem of our relationships we can never be satisfied unless all the high ethical sanctions of which we dream in our rarest

mood and of which we think in our loftiest moment are maintained and reenforced.

When we come to the solution of life's problems which is offered by the Christian religion, at once very perplexing difficulties emerge. The poetry of forgiveness as it sings itself in the New Testament is very alluring. But what if it is a deceptive music? What if the peace it offers will give us a comfortable universe at the expense of the loss of a righteous universe? What if it turns the universe into an indulgent parent instead of a wise and strongly noble guardian of the moral law? It is not a question of mathematical logic. It is not at the moment a question of any demand enforced from without. It is a question of an ethical demand so structural in life that any solution which fails to meet its requirements simply cannot stand. In a certain war two children whose parents had been killed in a bombardment of the town where they lived were in charge of a rough soldier. The little boy in an argument with another lad used an ugly word which was forbidden in the careful home where he had been brought up. He looked fearfully at the soldier to see

if he had been overheard. The soldier laughed carelessly and said: "It doesn't matter. Say all of that sort of thing you like." In a sudden revulsion of feeling the boy burst into tears. "If you were my father, you would not say that," he burst out, and then he walked quietly away to play with the other children and to try to forget the sudden thrust of pain. We want to live in a kind universe, but we do not want to live in a universe which is too kind. We do not want to live in a universe which is so kind that it is careless. We want the high moral sanctions to be maintained even when it is against ourselves, and yet we want more deeply than we can say to find a peaceful home in a friendly world despite the folly and the failure of our lives.

The fashion in which the ministry of the cross answers to this twofold need is most remarkable. On the one hand it is all radiantly tender with the outreach of the most eager love. With all its tragedy it perpetually sets hope to blooming afresh in the world. It reaches open arms to receive sad, and sinning, and failing men. And yet with all its welcome, there is a high note of moral

austerity about it. With its invitation and its promise of forgiveness there is a quality of moral vigor in the message which it speaks which puts new sharpness in all our consciousness of ethical things. For forgiveness as we see it in the cross is a costly thing. It comes with the stain of blood upon it. It comes with the pang of a broken heart moving through it. There is no sense of easy complacency and there is no sense of ethical evasion about it. You know that all the imperishable moral sanctions are on the throne at the very moment when you receive the forgiveness which is offered at the cross. The love which forgives is all shot through with moral fire. The righteousness which judges is all illuminated by love.

It is possible to have the deepest sense of this without having a worked-out philosophy by means of which one attempts to explain it. The fact is that love speaks in the cross and righteousness also speaks from the cross. And the one is as imperial and as powerful as the other. To accept the ministry of the cross is to submit to the high ethical sanctions whose meanings speak through its suffering love.

To be sure, it is possible to say all this in a legalistic rather than a vital fashion. It is possible to point to Grotius and to say that this sort of emphasis is governmental rather than deeply real. In reply one must be content to say that governmental issues may be real issues as well, and that the human instinct for loyalty to ethical sanctions is the creator of the deepest things in government, so that an appeal to this instinct is not an appeal to something superficial but to something deep and structural in the life of man. At all events no method of dealing with the problem has any permanent power to satisfy which does not come as the voice of the ethical sanctions and not as an evasion of their behests. Calvary takes the moral law and makes it the forgiving friend as well as the high judge of man.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE CROSS AND MAN'S CONSCIENCE

"I HAVE plenty of pleasure, but I have no peace," said a man who sometimes paused in the midst of a rather hectic life for a bit of self-analysis. The processes by which a man attains inner serenity are the most significant which have to do with his personal life. If they come through some use of ethical or spiritual narcotics, there is always the possibility that the man will wake up to the meaning of it all with the old hunger unappeased and the old unrest gnawing away at his heart.

Somehow a man must come to be friends with himself. And this is anything but a simple problem. A good many people refuse real self-knowledge just because of a dim instinct that if they once knew themselves they could never be happy again. A man must come to such a relation to his own life that he can travel through every avenue

of his own soul and find nothing there which is able to disturb that dynamic and productive peace which has released his full energies for glad and creative activity.

"Couldst thou in vision see
Thyself the man God meant,
Thou never more couldst be
The man thou art, content."

But it is more than a change of purpose and motive and passionate allegiance, though all this is of course involved. At last, when a man has a new purpose, and a new singing motive, and a new glowing allegiance, a specter arises to plague him. The Ancient Mariner could not forget the fact that he had slain the albatross. Every man has slain white-winged ideals which were flying their glad way through his life. When a man has a resolute present allegiance, and a dominant will for future good, the past moves stealthily into the arena of his consciousness and roars like a wild beast which he must fight. Lady Macbeth tries in vain to wash the mark of blood off her delicate hand in the amazing sleep-walking scene. And the irrevocable past has torturing

thoughts for multitudes of people who do not remember crimes against the legal code, but who cannot think without deep and painful unrest of many a word and many a deed which lies like a stain upon some past day.

Of course it is possible to call all this sort of thing the result of an overwrought and neurotic condition. A good many men in our times have escaped from moral problems through the gateway of physiological psychology. But you do not really solve a problem by reducing it to the terms of the physical means by which its elements are expressed. If a man knocks another down, it is, of course, just a muscular reaction. If he sees a beautiful sunset, it is just a piece of photography where the eye takes the place of the camera. But there is more to all of these things than the physical means of expression. A man's conscience may get on his nerves, but it is a great mistake to think that his nervous system exhausts the meaning of his conscience. So we will have to go beyond the most brilliant physiological psychology in our endeavor to solve the problem of a conscience which knows no rest.

In Calvary God comes to man offering

to take upon himself all the burden of the folly, and failure, and sin of the past. Indeed, on the cross Jesus made every man's bad past spiritually his own in the very definite sense of bending under the weight of the painful and desperate tragedy of its evil. It was not for a moment a matter of personal exchange. It was a matter of spiritual appropriation. It was not a thing you can approach through logic or mathematics. It was something you can approach through the insight of the noblest intuition of poetry. That somebody else can carry the weight of my past is logically impossible. Psychologically it is the most transforming and wonderful experience in all the world. And the sense that God himself was in Christ taking the burden of the bad past of men upon his own life is the one experience which sets a man nobly free from the torturing power of old follies and failures to break the creative quiet of his peace. At the very moment when the cross commits him to a new future it sets him free from an evil past. It does not set him free in the sense of relieving him from the necessity of doing whatever he can to right any wrong which has wrought in-

jury to any human being. It does set him free in the sense that after he has done all he can do, it gives him a new assurance that the God who has bent under the weight of his past will not now let it stand between him and the best future the love of Christ has in store for him. God is conscience alive. Christ is conscience in action. Calvary is conscience in the very process of regenerating surgery. And the understanding of these things gives a man the power to make friends with himself in spite of old days. Past, and present, and future are in the powerful hand of the Saviour who speaks from the cross. When Calvary itself becomes a man's conscience he can have peace in spite of a past with many a stain upon it and of a future which is saved from uncertainty only by his faith in Christ.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE CROSS AND GOD'S CONSCIENCE

In Hugh Walpole's story, Jeremy, the young hero, tells a lie and a severe punishment is pronounced. His uncle Samuel tells a lie and nobody does anything about it. "He went slowly up the stairs to the nursery the happiest boy in the kingdom. But through all his happiness there was this puzzle: Uncle Samuel had told a lie, and no one had thought that it mattered. There were good lies and bad ones then. Or was it that grown-up people could tell lies and children mustn't?—" The problem of Jeremy is one which is easily raised and which has many unsuspcted relationships. The most difficult of them all comes into view when men try to apply to other men standards which they do not apply to God. Sometimes it would seem that they tactily admit that there is no real continuity in the moral life of the universe, that morality means one

thing for men and another thing for God. Of course when we look at the matter squarely it is at once evident that such a situation is intolerable. Conscience must mean one thing for man and for God if it is to mean any deep or real thing for man at all. There must be real ethical continuity in the life of all sentient creatures everywhere. Whatever may be said for a double standard of currency, a double standard of morals is out of the question.

Those who say, then, that human sin makes a problem for man but does not raise a problem for God, are really attacking the fundamental moral soundness of the world. Those who say that sin puts an obstacle in man which must be dealt with, but that there is no obstacle which God finds in his own life when he meets the tragedy of sin and the question of forgiveness, have simply failed to see what are the necessities of a valid ethical life in any conscious spirit. God's ethical life is the most precious and priceless thing in the universe. All that he does must come deeply out of that life. And so forgiveness must meet the test of the conscience of God.

And all of this is of the most actual con-

cern to man as well as to God. The whole structure of ethics will fall in fragments about man's feet unless he can be sure that the world itself is built along the lines of his deepest moral intuitions and that God has a moral experience which is profoundly in harmony with his own. If you can be sure that God has an ethical life infinitely deeper and richer than your own, but all the while a fulfillment, and not a contradiction, of your own deepest sense of moral things, then all the sanctions of righteousness come to have a new and triumphant validity.

Can we get a glimpse real, if fleeting, of the fashion in which Calvary expresses and vindicates and satisfies the conscience of God as he stretches out friendly arms to the men who have done evil?

The more we meditate about that great deed of suffering self-giving upon the cross the more we see that it sends forth in action the very essential quality of God's whole ethical and spiritual life. All his hatred for sin is there. All his love for evil men is there. All his heartbreak over the staining evil of the world is expressed in a passionate act of devotion on the part of the Son of

God. All the radiant idealism which believes in a good future for men in spite of the soiling sadness of their evil ways is there alive in action. The more you think of it the more you see that what God is becomes what God does in the cross as nowhere else in all the world. And it is not hard to see that this very expression of God's nature in full and adequate fashion, so that men can see and understand, vindicates the ethical life of God so that he himself can feel that many things are now involved in a new set of relationships. That which expresses God's deepest attitude vindicates the quality and purpose and steadfastness of his ethical life. And the very fact that God can thus write the meaning of sin and his whole reaction toward it in a deed which speaks with undying eloquence to men, which captures their minds and wins their hearts and recreates their ethical life, gives an inner satisfaction to God which could come to him in no other way. That which expressed and vindicated his moral life also deeply satisfies his whole nature. And so as men move into a life of triumph over the evil to which they had surrendered, and all the while the whole of God's moral and

spiritual life comes adequately within the circle of man's appropriation, the conscience of God is satisfied.

All this, it must be said at once, is to be interpreted in the terms of personal experience and not in the terms of hard and formal syllogisms. It is the ethical experience of a God infinitely alive which must be satisfied and not the rigid demand of a code of rules. And God in suffering action to rescue men becomes the complete and triumphant satisfaction of that divine conscience which is itself a part of the vital movement of the divine nature. Only at the cross do we meet all of God. Only at the cross do we really know him. So meeting and so knowing, we are on the edge of an infinite sea, it is true. But what we see and what we learn is eternally valid. There is no other part of God's life which contradicts what we learn at the cross. And so that which satisfies the conscience of God in a marvelous sense creates a new conscience in man.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE CROSS AND THE NEW LIFE

"Most of the people whom I know make the motions of vitality without being alive at all," declared a cynical and misanthropic observer of men. "I came that they may have life, and that they may have it abundantly," declared the most vital Being who ever walked the earth. The power to share his own vitality was one most amazing secret of Jesus, and he is still the one supremely creative influence in the life of the world.

We already have followed in some detail some of the aspects of that process by which the individual man finds his way through the stern way of struggle into the peace of the new life. We have seen that the pivotal men in Christian history have been the men who knew the secrets of this struggling journey. Now we want to see something of the relation of the cross to that new life which

makes the whole world over for the individual man.

In the first place, it is at the cross that a man comes to have a strange new sense of his own value. As in suffering awe he stands in the presence of the great sacrifice and realizes that he was worth that to God, at the very moment when he is delivered from egotism he is delivered into a new and solemn sense of the value of his life in the eyes of God and of the worth it must possess in his own eyes. Then he comes to a sharp and terrible consciousness of the guilty tragedy of sin. In the presence of the great Sufferer he knows for the first time the malignant evil of sin in its inherent blackness. Sin is the foe who nailed Christ to the cross, and that foe is coiled in his own heart. Then a sweeping and pervading sense of a great and beautiful mystery comes over the man's life. He gets his first real appreciation of the meaning of the love of God. It was as boundless and as full of passionate willingness to endure pain as all the strange splendor of that sacrifice. And through all this there comes deep and moving the appreciation of the white and glowing righteousness

of the character of God. His stainless beauty is seen on Calvary as it is seen nowhere else. And a man's trust in Christ, his great leaping act of faith in the Christ who died for him is made with all these things moving through his mind, and mastering his conscience, and dominating his heart. And the new life comes sweeping in all glowing with the richness and the wonder of these same truths deep and throbbing in his experience. Truth ceases to be merely something to be thought. It is alive in his life. It is a part of himself.

The new life is a commanding and creative experience. And the very moment when a man enters into the living vigor of it, he finds himself committed to hate the things which brought Christ to the cross and to love the things which were dearer than life to the great sufferer. He feels that he must die with Christ to some things and that he must live with Christ to some things. And the death to evil and the life to the good are both mediated by that mighty deed on Calvary.

The spirit which made Jesus willing to die for men becomes a matter of supreme mean-

ing to the man who has entered upon the new life. He allows that spirit to move royally through his being. He allows it to judge everything which he finds there, and he accepts the results of that judgment in glad loyalty. The thoughts he thinks, the words he speaks, and the deeds he works into the fabric of his life are all brought to the test of that quality of life which Jesus revealed in his death. That death proves the most living thing in all the world.

The mystical splendors of the inner life of the Christian center in all that comes to him from the cross. In untold and manifold ways he finds there secrets which are perpetually seen from new angles of meaning, and so the days of his discovery of new and opening vistas in the life of the inner communion are also days of perpetual discovery of new meaning in the cross.

The new life is begun and continued and brought to rich maturity in the profoundest relation to the deed of strategy upon Mount Calvary.

CHAPTER XL

THE CROSS AND BROTHERHOOD

WHEN Thomas Mott Osborne began his remarkable work at Sing Sing he was in possession to an unusual degree of the psychology of the groups we ordinarily dispose of by the brief phrase the criminal classes. He knew the moral code of the "crook." He knew the unhesitating loyalty which a man in the underworld will give to his "pal," and he expressed the goal of his own effort in a phrase full of pith, a phrase whose very meaning came out of the life to which he desired to minister. He said he wanted to teach the crook to think of every man as his pal. He knew that if the crook would give to every man what he was ready to give to one man, he would be the very best sort of citizen. The principle is capable of a very much enlarged application. If you can get every man to view all other men as he views some men, the problem of brotherhood functioning in the world will be solved.

As a matter of fact, Christianity has been

the supreme power in the world for the creation of brothers. The men who refused to run away from Alexandria in the days of the plague centuries ago were typical of the sort of thing Christianity has been doing in the life of man: That which begins as a new relation to God at once becomes a new relation to other men. The man who knows God as his father moves right on to the place where he thinks of other men as his brothers. The new life is not merely a glorious rapture in the soul, though it often has mystical splendors of the most wonderful character. It is a spirit which must express itself in every human relation. It is a spirit which can be contented with nothing less than brotherhood.

We are now to ask ourselves the question as to how the cross affects the power of the Christian religion to create practical and self-forgetful brotherhood in the world. And we are not surprised to find that the cross is the very central inspiration to that sort of brotherhood which is ready to bend under a burden of sacrificial pain for the one who is loved. In truth, Christianity as we see it in the death of Christ upon the

cross is the supreme expression of the sort of brotherly love which refuses to count the cost. Jesus made himself one with men. He made their woeful burdens his own. He bent under the load of their sorrow. He bent under the weight of their sin. And at last he bared his heart to an experience whose bitter and breaking power left him lifeless in the presence of his foes. He was glorious and self-forgetful brotherhood alive in the world and dying for the world.

Now, the man who accepts the ministry of the cross for his own life commits himself to the spirit which brought Jesus to Calvary. John Ruskin put it with terrible power when he said that crosses are not made to be carried, but that upon them men may be crucified. There is a crucifixion which every Christian must know. There is a cruel and hard and indulgent self, drinking in pleasure at the expense of others, which must be slain by the man to whom the cross speaks its full word. The forces of a man's spirit which make brotherhood impossible must be taken to the place of execution. Unbrotherliness must be crucified in the man who receives the message of the cross of Christ.

And the man who receives into his life the gift which the cross bears to men must be ready to live the sort of life which Jesus lived. He must be ready to pay a real price to be a brother of men. He must become an expert in that sort of human contact which will enable him to bring hope where there was cold and hard discouragement, and joy where there was misery and pain. And so deeply must the heart of a brother be his heart that he is ready for great and supreme sacrifices in its name.

We should rather say all this in the form of recounting what the cross has done than in the form of saying what it must do. For just these wonderful things it has done in countless cases as it has moved forth in its powerful ministry among men. Contemporary life is full of social passion. Much of it does not recognize its own connection with Golgotha. But it is profoundly true that the one supreme energy making for brotherhood among human beings is that perfect expression of suffering brotherhood on the green hill far away. There we find the standard, and there we find the inspiration for actual brotherhood among men.

CHAPTER XLI

THE CROSS AND THE SOCIAL ORGANISM

In that striking poem, "The Sale of Saint Thomas," by Lascelles Abercrombie, there is a passage describing an ideal palace seen by an Eastern king in a dream:

"A palace made of souls—
Ay, there's a folly for a man to dream!
He saw a palace covering all the land,
Big as the day itself, made of a stone,
That answered with a better gleam than glass
To the sun's greeting, fashioned like the sound
Of laughter copied into shining shape:
So the king said."

The dream of the palace made of souls has been the inspiration of many a poet and of many a seer. The hope of a society built into the solidarity of joyful and perpetually productive action is one of the fairest hopes which have quickened the pulse of man. The society of friendly men about the harmonious tasks of the world is the goal of human

history. No men have dreamed of it more passionately than the men of our own time. No men have longed for it with a more possessing desire than those who have dared to face the need of the world to-day and the call of the world of to-morrow. Building the wrong sort of a social organism, Germany came to a fall of dramatic and terrible character. Attempting to build another sort of social organism which also has elements of destruction in it, the Bolshevist movement the world over is doomed to failure. But the social hope persists. The belief in the social organism has not perished from the mind of man, and like the Phoenix, it rises from its ashes whenever we think that it is finally destroyed.

What is the contribution of that deed of suffering rescue which makes the cross immortal to the creation of that social organism which shall survive the wrecks of passing institutions? The answer to this question is that Christianity is all the while about the task of creating an invisible but powerful social organism. Sometimes men have made the mistake of thinking that it could be institutionalized into the form of an external

political power. Hildebrand was deeply sincere and deeply mistaken in this very endeavor. But the palace of souls is not to be the external splendor of a church which has political authority over all the world. The palace of souls is a real force in history. But eye has not seen it. And its power is in the invisible realm of the spirit. It has come into being whenever men have been made into the oneness of sacrificial life whose inspiration and whose creative center is the cross. They have been a part of an invisible solidarity all the more mighty because supported by no craft of political power. The men and women who know the secret of the cross in every age constitute a social organism whose significance is of the most far-reaching character. The cross is at the heart of it a protest against everything which makes life inorganic, against everything which sets in action forces of disintegration. And it has in it the power of synthesis, the power of cohesion, the power of creating an inner unity and a permanent solidarity.

All this passes out into the field of action. The inner spirit becomes the outer achievement. New laws, new institutions, new and

powerful customs, new and influential ways of viewing life and responsibility—all of these come from the inner spiritual organism as it moves forth to function in the life of the world. Society itself at last is to become the living reflection of these inner inspirations. And the love which fastened Jesus to the cross is the center of all the new synthesis which is the hope of man.

A man who had been an adventurer in the realm of moral and spiritual things, who had tried to appropriate what was good in every religious and ethical system, who had prided himself upon being a cosmopolitan in his sympathy and in his life, was gazing in amazement at the broken and bleeding world at the close of the great war. He had one friend to whom he wrote letters which told the deepest story of his thought. To that friend he wrote: "Society is doomed unless it can be made organic. And I can see no hope for that unless it is in the influences which come from the cross of Christ." The secrets of the world are all at Calvary. And among them none is held more securely by the crucified than that of building the world into a shining palace of living souls.

CHAPTER XLII

THE STRATEGY OF THE CROSS

"THE cross is a master key which fits every lock of human experience." An old theological teacher was speaking. He was a thinker whose knowledge of men was equal to his knowledge of the materials in his own field. Like the Pope in Browning's poem, he had "trod many lands, probed many hearts, beginning with his own."

A keen young student was standing near him. "I am not sure that I know just what you mean by that," said the boy.

"I mean," was the reply, "that whatever your belief or lack of belief, the cross always has something to say to you. And if a man begins with the point where it touches his life in vital fashion and walks out along the path which opens before him, at last he will come to know its fullest and its deepest meaning."

If a man comes to the cross with no theo-

logical views at all, the story of that suffering gift of life for man speaks with immediate and powerful authenticity. It renews a man's belief in love. It creates a new conception of the length to which selfless devotion will go. It reaches for the best there is in a man, and by a noble contagion calls to his own capacity for devotion to a cause, to a friend, to righteousness in the world. There is creative energy in the very story. The sun shines through it upon a new and more noble world. A world where anybody could think of such a story is a new sort of world in which to live.

If a man believes that God himself in his own Son suffered upon the cross, a new wealth of meaning emerges. He never knew God before. Now he has seen God in action. Now he has seen God in the torturing pain of a great sacrifice. Now he has seen how much God loves the men whom he has made. And the whole world is full of God as he turns from the cross where God's own Son has died to the world in which he must live. Everything has a new sort of foundation. With this sort of a God a man can think different thoughts. With this sort of

God a man can speak different words. With this sort of God a man can do different deeds. God himself takes an absolutely new place in the strategies of human life after he has been seen in the cross.

If a man believes that the cross speaks a message about God's character as well as a message about God's love, other meanings stand forth, for now Calvary tells the story of how much God hates sin as well as the story of how much God loves the man who has sinned. And so it comes to pass that the conscience is made all over again in the fires of that great sacrifice. The cross becomes a standard as well as an inspiration. Eyes which have seen the cross cannot see some other things. And that one deed makes some other deeds impossible for those who understand its message to the conscience of man. The test of the cross becomes the basis of a new ethic. And the achievement of the cross becomes the conserver of the moral life of a man as well as the creator of a new and deeper morality.

If a man believes that God himself in the hour when he bent his life to the passionate pain of the cross wrought in such deep and

masterful ethical and spiritual fashion that some things became possible for him which were not possible before, the cross becomes a basis for such a venture of a deed of trust as rests all a man's past, and present, and future upon the Saviour who wrought that great achievement. And the peace which passeth all understanding flows into the life of the man who makes the great commitment and takes the great adventure. The doors are opened Godward in a completely new fashion, and fellowship with God comes to have a new meaning in the soul of man.

If one believes that Calvary sets forth a principle as well as is the embodiment of an achievement, then he is gladly committed to the perpetuation of the spirit of the cross in the world. And the way of sacrifice is glorified with the light which falls from Calvary as men walk through the world not counting their lives dear unto themselves but giving with boundless generosity of their personal powers for the service of men. And when the great and terrible demand for the surrender of life itself comes, as it came to many in the great war, there comes with the demand a knowledge that everything is dif-